# Middleborough Antiquarian

*Devoted to the preservation of local history by*
MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.
Established 1922
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# THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN

#3

Photo by Clint Clark

This noble bird sits in the Civil War Room of the Middleborough Historical Museum. It was once the property of E. W. Peirce Post 8, Grand Army of the Republic. No one knows for certain where the eagle came from or how it came to be sort of a mascot for E. W. Peirce Post 8. In the year 1938 there appeared in an issue of the Middleboro Gazette an item stating that a large eagle with a wing spread of seven feet had been shot in the East Middleboro section of the town. One wonders if this could have been the eagle.

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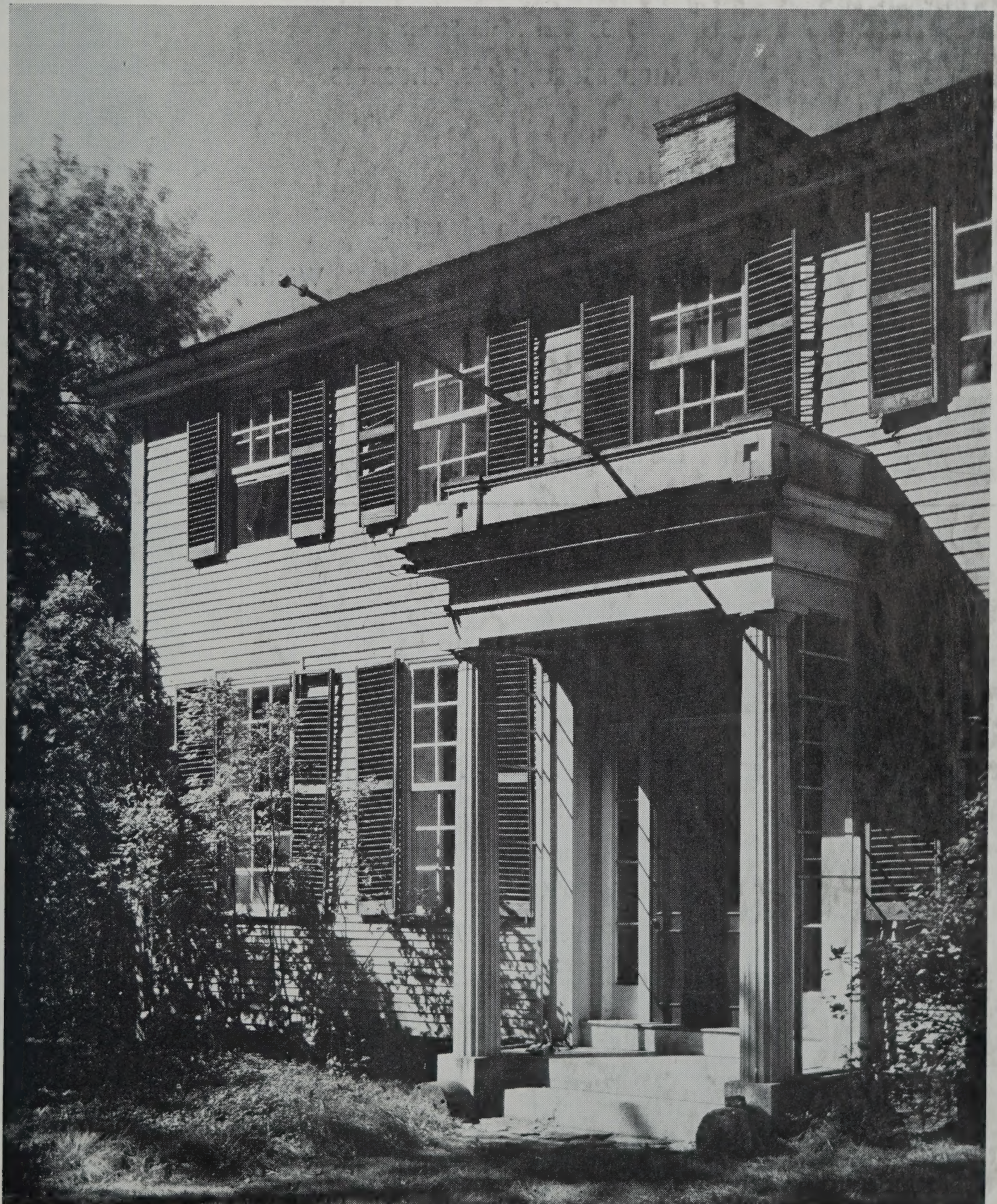
VOLUME XIV OCTOBER 1972 NUMBER 1



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# THE DOCTOR PETER OLIVER HOUSE OF MIDDLEBOROUGH

by George Ward Stetson

The accompanying illustration pictures Middleborough's most historic house. It was built in 1769 for Dr. Peter Oliver by his father Judge Peter Oliver, the last Chief Justice of The Superior Court of His Majesty's Province. The home may have been a wedding gift from father to son, for on Feb. 1, 1770 Dr. Peter Oliver married Sally daughter of the Governor, Thomas Hutchinson of Milton.

Judge Oliver was a son of Daniel Oliver a wealthy Boston merchant. Of distinguished forebears, one aunt was a granddaughter of Governor Bradford while another ancestor, Captain James Oliver served with honors in King Phillips War. The Judge was related by marriage to Copley, the noted portrait painter of the period.

Judge Peter and his brother Andrew were destined to fill conspicuous places in the early history of our nation, Andrew serving for several years as Provincial Secretary and later as Lieutenant Governor. In these positions, he did much toward speeding the outbreak of hostilities with the mother country. Andrew's second wife was a sister of the wife of Governor Hutchinson. The relationship was made still more intimate by intermarriage between the children of both Andrew and Peter with those of Governor Hutchinson.

An excellent student, Judge Peter upon graduation from Harvard, showed tremendous ability and knowledge in the fields of law and business. In 1733, following his marriage, he assisted his father in business for a time and in 1744 purchased about three hundred acres of land in Middleborough. Sharing in some of these purchases was his great friend the Attorney General of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, Jeremiah Gridley, called by his associates "The Father of The Boston Bar," Jeremiah was a brother of Washington's Chief of Engineers, General Richard Gridley, who laid out the fortifications on Bunker Hill and Dorchester Heights. Later Judge Oliver secured as his own all of the Gridley property in Middleborough.

Prior to his purchase, a saw and grist mill had prospered here on the banks of the Nemasket River. His keen eye for business saw the need for iron manufacturing in the area, realizing that his newly acquired property lent itself admirably for the erection of a forge and blast furnace. Thus during the French and Indian War, Judge Oliver supplied howitzers and mortars, shot and shell for the British. Here too, were shaped iron rods to be cut and hammered by hand into nails for our people.

In 1756, Oliver succeeded Judge Saltonstall on the bench of the Superior Court. At that time, it was "considered a very popular appointment". Though under terrific stress, due to the times, his decisions were invariably considered fair. As an Associate Justice he sat on the trial of Captain Preston and his men following the Boston Massacre.

On a high hill overlooking the home of his son Peter Jr., the Oliver Furnace and the river valley, the Judge had, in 1744, built magnificent Oliver Hall called by Governor Hutchinson "the most beautiful mansion in all His Majesty's Colony." John Adams and Judge Sewall in their diaries stressed the beauty and charm of the Hall and its spacious gardens. Much of the interior woodwork and paneling, as well as furnishings, came from England. This estate was the setting for the four day marriage reception, early in 1770, of Sally Hutchinson and Dr. Peter Oliver. It is to be regretted with feelings against the Royalists reaching the boiling point, during the War of the Revolution, that a crowd of townspeople many of whom had loved and respected the Oliver family in happier days, utterly destroyed the beautiful mansion by fire.

Remaining loyal to his king, he was impeached by the General Court, in his position as Chief Justice, then banished and forbidden to return to New England under pain of death. So in March of 1774 Judge Oliver, son Doctor Peter, General Gage and their families sailed for Halifax and London never to return. Subsequent letters from the Judge in England attested to his friends here of the love he cherished for his home in Middleborough in New England.

With the confiscation of all Tory property by Act of the General Court in 1770, Dr. Peter Oliver's home, for less than five years, was among those seized. It is of personal interest to the writer that in 1794 his great-great-grandparents, Judge Thomas and Abigail (Doggett) Weston, purchased Doctor Oliver's home and much of the business property from the Commissioners of Tory Property. In this historic house Judge Weston and family lived for forty years until his death. Very appropriately, twenty-five years ago the Oliver House once again became the property of the Peter Oliver family. The present Mrs. Peter Oliver and her late husband have painstakingly restored both home and gardens to their original beauty.

Stairway of Peter Oliver House

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XIV 1972 Number 1
Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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If this house could speak, much colonial history would be revealed. Nobility has crossed the threshold in the persons of Sir Grenville and Sir John Temple. Governor Hutchinson spent several summers here. Governor James Bowdoin was a frequent overnight guest. Many of Hutchinson's official papers are date-lined Middleborough. Benjamin Franklin was entertained here for several days and John Adams was a guest on occasion. Since early days certain of the spacious chambers have been referred to as "the Bowdoin room," "the Hutchinson room," and "the Franklin room." In early days the attic was partitioned for slavequarters. From time to time rumor had it that a tunnel reached from the cellar to an outlet on the bank of the Nemasket River. If true, this "Underground Railroad" tunnel has left no trace.

An article written in 1947 by Judge Oliver's descendant of the same name best describes his home by saying in part and in essence that it is almost an exact duplicate of the Wythe house in Williamsburg, Va. The windows, fireplaces, stairs and bannisters are the same with the exception being that stair and hall locations are reversed.

Mounting local interest in Middleborough's most renowned family has brought the beginning of restoration at Oliver Furnace site and development of Oliver Mill Park. Nearby, with its position in the history of our nation abundantly and firmly established proudly stands the Doctor Peter Oliver House.

## PROGRAM 1972-1973

NOVEMBER 6, 1972

Speaker, Mrs. Cynthia Krussell, Marshfield Hills, Mass.

Subject: Indian and Pilgrim Trails of the Old Colony. Illus. with slides.

FEBRUARY 5, 1973

Speaker, Mark Hollander, Antique Dealer, Brockton, Mass.

Subject: The Renewed Interest in Antiques

APRIL 2, 1973

Speaker, Dr. G. Norman Eddy, Cambridge, Mass.

Subject: Early 19th Century Woodwind and Brass Unusual Instruments. Illus. with slides.

JUNE 4, 1973

Annual Meeting. A Show and Tell Program. Mrs. Lawrence B. Romaine, Chairman.

Meeting to be held at First Congregational Church at the Green. Supper.

## CORRECTION

Parishioners of the First Congregational Church have questioned the occasion which prompted the group photograph that appeared in the last issue of the Antiquarian. Although her picture does not appear with the group, Mrs. Aymar Gates was among those present and distinctly remembers that this gathering was to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the First Congregational Church, and that the date was August 26, 1894.

## THE HISTORY OF THE PEIRCE BLOCK

by William L. Waugh

For some reason Weston's history of Middleboro, published in 1906, carries only a picture of the Peirce building at the four corners in Middleboro. Perhaps the building was so new in 1906 that Mr. Weston did not think it had a history. This fact is not true in 1972, however, so I have gathered a little information concerning the block which was erected, according to a date on the North Main Street end of the building, in 1900.

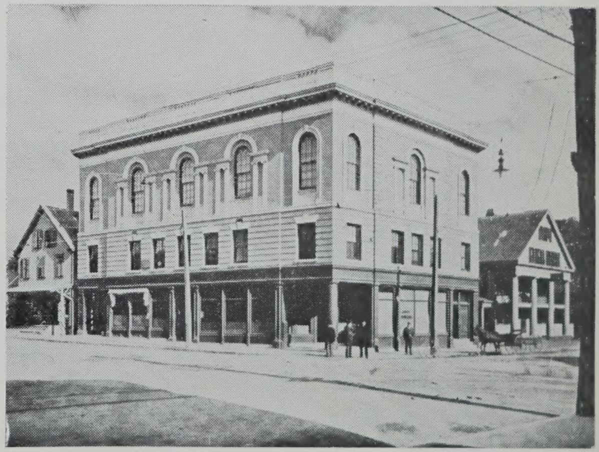
The building is named for its builder, Thomas S. Peirce, and in 1972 is held in trust by the trustees of the Peirce estate that has given so many benefactions to the town of Middleboro.

The block is three stories high. The upper story is the meeting place of the local Chapter of the Free Masons. The second floor is made up of a meeting hall and several private offices. Tenants of the offices include the Frederick S. Weston insurance business, now owned by Winthrop R. Manwaring; the offices of Dr. B. M. Lerner, a podiatrist; and Joseph C. Whitcomb.

The year following 1900 saw the United States Government lease the street floor as a postoffice. When the present postoffice was erected in 1932-33, this part of the building was leased to the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company as a self-service store and remained an A&P until the 1950's. However, the postoffice safe is still in the building.

In the past ten years tenants have included the Bottle Shop, an alcoholic beverage store, Maria's Gift Shop and a hobby shop. In 1968, the Republican Party had its headquarters in a store facing on Center Street.

The accompanying photograph shows the building when it was occupied by the Federal Post Office and before the Nemasket House was demolished in 1939.



**The Peirce Block**

**Cor. Centre and North Main Sts.**

**ca 1930**

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

of

Olde Middleborough

in

Plymouth County

Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

As so often proves to be the case, the early records of a town are incomplete and in some cases non-existent. Middleborough records are no exception and many records were destroyed in King Philip's War. Yet enough of the early records remain in existence to give background information regarding the establishment and early years of the town of Middleborough.

In 1663 the area was known as Nemasket and was under the jurisdiction of Plymouth Colony until 1669 when a portion of Plymouth (the area known as Nemasket) was incorporated as the town of Middleberry. Eventually the boundaries were established and the present town of Middleborough as we know it today came into being.

By the time the area became known as Middleberry and a settlement in its own right, a generation had passed and the residents of Middleberry were the sons and grandsons of the original pilgrims and their knowledge of the "old world" was what their parents and grandparents told them. For the most part they learned to live and trade with the Indians. Maize or corn, the squash and beans were vegetables the white settlers learned to plant, harvest and eat with the help of their Indian neighbors.

Voting power in the town was granted only to those who were considered freemen or freeholders of twenty pounds (20£) ratable or taxable estate. Furthermore, these men must have taken the Oath of Fidelity. A freeman is identified as one who took an oath to a government and church and was granted civil or political liberty. In other words the residents of a particular town or community swore to uphold the laws of the individual town and of the state or commonwealth. A freeholder was defined as a man who held land in fee simple, which entitled him to the right to vote and hold office. Frequently we find in the old records and on ship passenger lists the term 'indentured servant' and this indicates a person who engages himself to another for a certain number of years, to pay off a debt (frequently his passage money to come to America) and the usual term of service was from four to seven years. Upon the expiration of the term of service or indenture the man was usually 'admitted freeman' of the community and was free to vote and conduct business in the community. Most towns today have abolished the freeman's oath. However, the state of Vermont still requires that all persons desiring to register as voters take the 'freeman's oath' to support the laws of the state.

Contrary to some thinking being an indentured servant was not a stigma or blemish on the family honor but rather it represented a lack of funds and the length of service indicated the amount of the debt. It was the Colonial way of making loans and the loans were paid back in years of service rather than in cash plus interest money.

A bit later on the 'bound boy' comes on the scene. A parent makes an arrangement or contract with another whereby a child is 'bound over' for a certain length of time to live in the household of the village shoemaker, carpenter, candlemaker, tailor or any other of the many trades. The boy is to be taught the trade of the man in whose household he goes to live. In many cases a sum of money is paid to the shoemaker or tradesman. Sometimes the arrangement is that the boy will also do chores or some specific task.

The early settlers in Middleborough learned a variety of trades by participating in the activities of the community. There were no stores in our presentday use of the word but rather a series of home businesses. A certain settler made shoes, another made tables and another clothing. It took many weeks for a message or letter to be sent back to England, more weeks before a ship would return with the requested merchandise. Life in the early days was not complex, it was simple and productive. Our Yankee ingenuity solved many problems and satisfied many needs.

## QUESTION BOX

Mrs. Albert Rohrabacher, 201 Byron Road, Howell, Michigan, (48843) wishes information about the following:

In old correspondence, siblings mentioned are, "Uncle Zeba Wood, Millie Keith, Patience Keith, and Mehitable Dunham. Would like parents name. Also mentioned are William Shaw, Abraham Shaw, Clement Bates, and "our cousin Rodney K. Shaw," of Easton and Middleboro area.

The following information has been sent to the Antiquarian by Mrs. R. F. R. Tolson of Nova Scotia. She states that genealogy supplements of the Nova Scotian descendants of John Churchill, first generation at Plymouth, Massachusetts, are available from her and can be obtained for $4.00 plus postage by writing her: Mrs. R. F. R. Tolson, Fort Sackville, Bedford, Nova Scotia, Canada.

The book covers Lemuel (4) Churchill, who came from Plymouth to Nova Scotia in 1760, to the 13th generation in Nova Scotia - 1972. It is titled, "The Nova Scotia Pioneer Churchills Who Left New England by Sea, and were Connected with the Sea".

Mrs. Tolson mentions that many Churchills lived in the adjacent towns of Plympton and Carver. Benjamin Churchill (3) moved to Middleboro and his children born there were: Mary (4) born 1720, married James Drew; Perez (4) born 1722, married Deborah Thayer; Elizabeth (4) born 1725, married Deacon Benjamin Thomas; James (4) born 1726, married Martha Blackwell (first wife) Mercy Cobb (second wife) Mary Gorham (third wife); Benjamin (4) born 1728, married Thankful Wood; Susannah (4) born 1733.

Mr. Alden Keene, who presented to the Historical Museum the lithograph of Peirce Academy used on the cover of the last issue of the Antiquarian, wishes to know the name of the father of Augusta Smith Peirce, who was Mr. Keene's grandmother and attended Peirce Academy prior to 1850.

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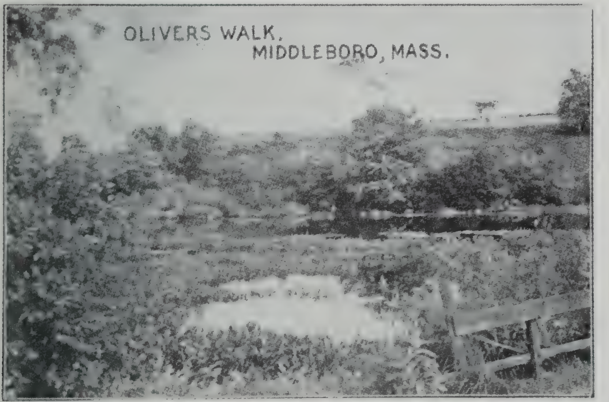
## THE PEIRCE FIELDS AND FOOTBRIDGE

by Lyman Butler

At one time the land on North Street opposite the Cosseboom Blacksmith Shop belonged to the Peirce Estate, from Oliver's Walk easterly to the path opposite the Blacksmith Shop and from North Street to the Nemasket River. This was rich pasture land and at one time there was a large barn which was filled with choice meadow hay each year. This barn burned one Fourth of July many years ago. The late Paul Silva pastured cows in part of this area. At that time, the house across from the smithy also was a Peirce house. John Cushman's farmland abutted the Peirce property. The cart path that led from North Street terminated at the river where in 1919 the Nemasket Hill Cemetery Association built a foot bridge across the Nemasket so people wanting to visit the cemetery would not have to walk way around through Muttock or by way of the Green. The bridge was kept in good condition for some years until the auto became common, but was left to rot away until about 1945 when the Cemetery Association rebuilt it. After this, the bridge was used some but not nearly as much as before the auto came along and gradually it was neglected again and little by little it disappeared until now all that is left are the cement piers that held up the wooden structure.

The steps up the hill to the cemetery are still intact and can be used by anyone desiring to go down from the rear of the cemetery. Before the auto, when people liked to take a long stroll of an afternoon, this was a favorite trek down the lane to the river and maybe have a picnic by the bridge. The lush pasture and meadow land is gradually being made into a housing project and the lane to the old foot bridge is a highway leading to the various homes on this, one of the most beautiful spots in our town.



**THE PEIRCE MEADOWS**
**Where Foot Bridge**
**Crossed Nemasket River**

## A CREMATION BURIAL COMPLEX AT TITICUT

by William B. Taylor

*Part IV*

Burial Pit No. 11 was encountered about 6 feet from Pit No. 5 near the northerly edge of Dunn's crematory. This oval-shaped pit measured 30 by 35 inches and was reached only after tunneling under the immense dump of trees and dirt, previously described. The pit, 35 inches deep, extended 8 inches into the white sand and had charcoal scattered throughout its fill along with 8 calcined human bone fragments. Some 12 inches above its bottom, which was covered with a 2 inch layer of red ocher, a Hammerstone appeared. Lying in the ocher at the bottom was a 6 inch Eared No. 3 spear point of bluish-gray felsite. It is quite thin and displays excellent workmanship. Probably it represents the most outstanding blade recovered from this burial complex. (See Fig. No. 14)

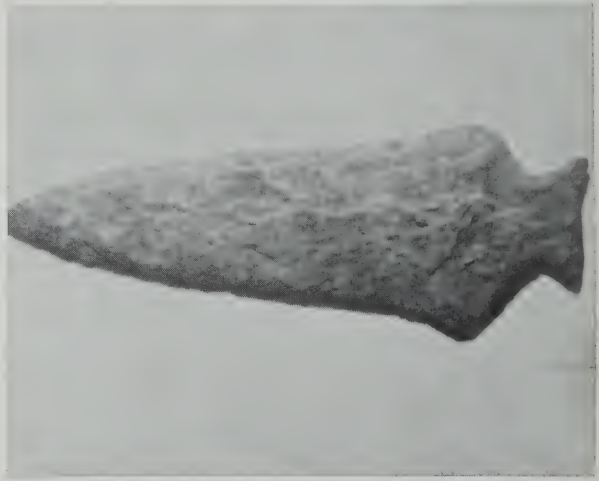


Fig. #14 6 1/8" Eared No. 3 spear point from Pit No. 11.

Adjacent to Pit No. 10 in a northerly direction over the boundary more good luck attended our excavation, which at this spot extended under a sizeable standing oak. Directly below this tree appeared this large oval pit, about 42 by 66 inches in size, which reached irregularly into the white sand in some places. It contained 6 deposits of red ocher, 5 of which yielded artifacts. As the work of excavating progressed, faint traces of red ocher were noted high in the pit. This light staining of ocher may have occurred by chance during the back filling of the pit. Or maybe there are other reasons to account for the ocher in this pit appearing in a pinkish color, with a high sand-saturated content.

Secondary Deposit No. 1 — Pit No. 12, had an oval shape of about 6 by 10 inches and was located near the pit's edge at the southern side, 33 inches deep at the pit's bottom, where the ocher was the thickest. In it appeared a Strike-a-light set at one edge, consisting of a felsite Striker with yellow decomposed remains on two of its sides, probably what was left of a pyrites block, which originally had served as the other part of the set for making fire. (See Fig. No. 15)

Secondary Deposit No. 2 — Pit No. 12 was a small ocher pocket with a 6 inch diameter, located nearby the first at

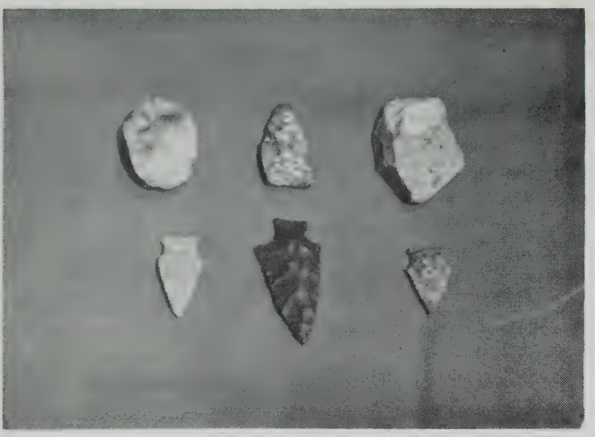


Fig. #15 At top are two Strikers from Deposit No. 1 and No. 6 with Stem scraper (center) from Deposit No. 2, No. 12. Bottom shows three Eared No. 3 points found in Deposit No. 4, Pit No. 12.

about the same depth. It yielded but one grave good, a Stem scraper of felsite. (See Fig. No. 15)

Secondary Deposit No. 3 — Pit No. 12, was relatively large in size with a 24 inch diameter, and was uncovered close by the first two pockets occupying a good portion of the west end of the pit. At one side of this deposit at only 20 inches down from ground level a small handful of calcined human bone fragments was encountered. At a depth of 21 inches on the opposite side, at the edge of this deposit, appeared a 6 inch long slightly Grooved adz made of hard stone, with a sharply ground cutting blade. An overall polish of high spots seems to have resulted from the final grinding in finishing this tool. At the bottom of this ocher deposit at the pit's base was found a fire burned Eared No. 3 beveled point lying about 4 inches away from a pebble Strike-a-light set, of which the pyrites block had disintegrated, leaving a yellow pulpy coating on the felsite pebble Striker, as well as on the point to which apparently it had spread. (Reference to fire-making sets may be found on page 78 in C. C. Willoughby's Antiquities of the New England Indians. He says that pyrites lumps are usually disintegrated except in the case of protohistoric graves — such would be grave No. 15 at Titicut — or when the mineral is in an impure state.) In this Deposit No. 3 the cache of calcined human bone fragments contained no artifacts. (See Fig. No. 16)

Secondary Deposit No. 4 — Pit No. 12, had a 15 inch diameter and lay alone by itself at the easterly end of the pit. It occurred at a depth of about 31 inches, and at its bottom 3 Eared No. 3 points were found in 3 inches of red ocher. One was made of brownish yellow flint — probably from a Pennsylvania source. Another was of felsite with signs of having been burned, and the third of felsite had a very sharp point, somewhat fire scorched. They lay close together as though carefully placed in the ocher. (See Fig. No. 15)

Secondary Deposit No. 5 — Pit No. 12, was somewhat smaller, confined within a 10 inch diameter round pocket of ocher. It lay nearby Deposit No. 3 along the north side of the pit, and appeared at about a 20 inch depth, where fragments of calcined human bone occurred.

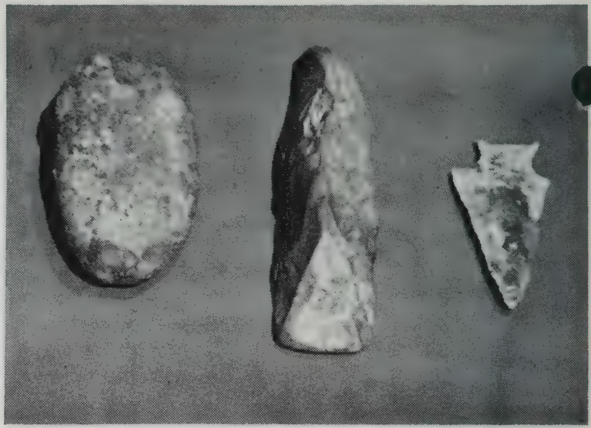


Fig. #16 Recoveries from Pit No. 12, Deposit No. 3. At left is a Striker, with 6" Chipped Adze in center and Eared No. 3 beveled point on right.

*To be continued in the next issue of the Antiquarian*

## I CAN REMEMBER WHEN

by Clint Clark

There are those who will tell you that Middleboro doesn't change. This seems to me to be far from the truth. Although I am not as old as many and therefore cannot remember as many changes in the town as some, I can remember:

When the Post Office was located in the Peirce Building at the corner of Center and North Main Streets.

When the bandstand at the playgrounds was in the present Town Hall parking lot at the corner of Nickerson Avenue and Union Street.

When the Union Street school was a wooden building. This structure was replaced during the depression of the 1930's, partly with federal relief money.

When fireworks were lawfully possessed and set-off by any citizen. Each year such business establishments as Shurtleff's Lumber, Faetti's and Farrar's sold fireworks from booths in the Elk's field where the A and P is now located.

When the Star Mill was closed. The Winthrop-Atkins Company now occupies the buildings that were empty.

When the Middleboro Skating Club on East Main Street was one of the most popular undertakings in the town and drew crowds each winter.

When Bob's Diner was located in a wooden building directly on the corner of North Main and Wareham Streets.

When the independent grocer flourished along with the big chains. In particular, "Bay" O'Toole had his Homestead Grocery, which was located for many years on South Main Street where the Trust Company has its Loan Office.

When The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company was located at the Center Street end of Thatcher's Row and had a small store in Everett Square.

When the Middleboro Theater was open seven days a week with performances in both the afternoon and evening.

When the local Buick Agency was located on Sproat Street.

These illustrations are just a few that history records and my memory brings back. One of the aspects of history that is apparent is the fact that history does not stand still but rather is a panorama of change.

## A BRANCH OF THE HOLMES FAMILY TREE

by Helen Wood Ashley

*With borrowings from "Yankee from Olympus"*
*by Catherine Drinker Bowen*

A letter from my grandmother, who always signed herself Mrs. William Bourne Wood, dated June 28, 1912, stimulated my interest in the Holmes family (her family) which has been mulling all these sixty years and finally culminated in this study. The letter is self-explanatory:

> *I am very glad you are interested to know about your ancestors. Rev. Dr. Abiel Holmes graduated at Yale, fitted for the ministry and was settled over a Congregational Church at Macon, Ga., but as the climate did not agree with him he returned and was next settled over a church in Cambridge, Mass., where he remained during the rest of his life. He lived to a great age and in his day was a man of note, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, whom you wished to know about, was his son. Uncle Abiel was a physician, also had a brother who was a physician, and his name was Hartwell Holmes and he too had a son whose name was Luther Holmes and he was my father, so you will readily understand that the minister's son and the Doctor's son were our cousins.*
>
> *Yours sincerely,*
> *Grandma.*
> *Mrs. William Bourne Wood*
> *June* 28, 1912.

When I first read YANKEE FROM OLYMPUS, I got a special thrill out of reading about Grandmother's "Uncle Abiel," and was fascinated to the end by all that Catherine Drinker Bowen told of his religious ideas and those of his son, the poet, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and HIS son, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. An escape from Calvinism, she calls it. As I reread my grandmother's letter, I think back to a conversation unavoidably overheard as I lay in my little pink bedroom next to Grandma Wood's living room on the second floor of 112 South Main Street, the home to which Grandfather William Bourne Wood had years before brought his bride, Sarah Temperance Holmes, a former Middleborough school teacher, from her home in North Brookfield. Grandma's brother George and his wife were visiting and the discussion of the evening was about Unitarianism and the lamented fact that Grandma's son George (namely my father, George E. Wood) and his wife had become Unitarians. All I distinctly heard was, "Why they don't believe in the divinity of Christ!" By Grandmother Wood's time the thinking had progressed from Calvinism to Congregational, but it was still shocking to many to own a Unitarian in the family.

It was hard after so many years of Calvanism to get the clear perspective of the great and daring liberal thinker, Emerson, who in his DIVINITY SCHOOL ADDRESS of 1838 so clearly interpreted Jesus as saying, "I am divine. Through me God acts and speaks." "The true Christianity," said Emerson to the young divinity students, "is a faith like Christ's in the infinitude of man." Then he admonished his young graduates saying, "To your parishioners be, like Jesus, a divine man." The Quaker idea was "Part of God in every man."

The book begins on the autumn morning of 1800 when Abiel Holmes, gravely concerned over the approaching election of Thomas Jefferson, sat down in his parsonage in Harvard Square to commence the writing of his AMERICAN ANNALS, one of the first histories of the United States.

"Abiel was 36, handsome, widowed, and lonely . . . The parsonage needed a wife, but this was no time to be thinking of wives." The task of writing the Annals challenged him. "Under the clerical gown and bib his shoulders were broad; his thick dark hair hung to his shoulders, curling crisply at the ends; his level deep eyes sparkled with health, his color was high. He wore the dark robe of Calvinism with an air and loved the religion it symbolized. "Calvinism teaches that in consequence of Adam's sin in eating the forbidden fruit God brings into life all his posterity with a nature wholly corrupt:

In Adam's fall
We sinned all."

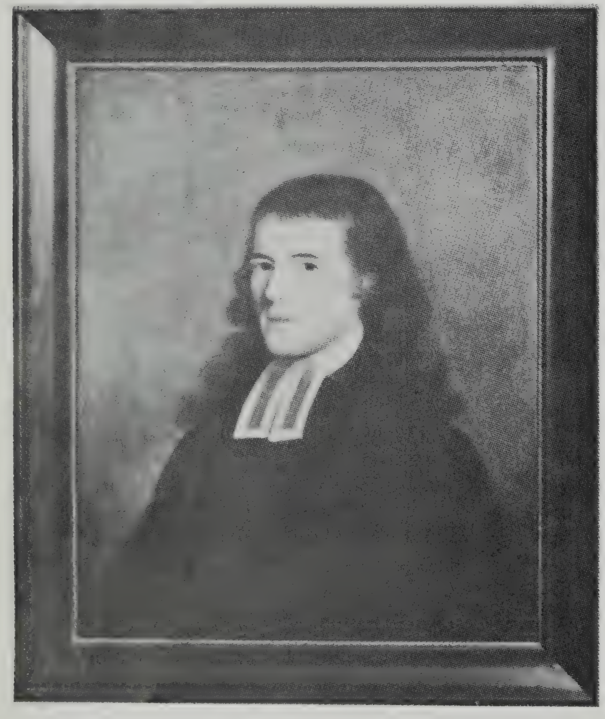
All mankind are therefore under God's wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life to death itself and to the pains of hell forever. Out of this ruined race God has elected a certain number to be saved by Christ, not on account of their faith or good works but wholly to pass over and condemn them to most gruesome torments of soul and body.

I have always thought of Calvinists as hard-hearted and bigoted, but I find nothing in Catherine Bowen's words to even suggest that about Uncle Abiel; in fact I find much to indicate his kindly, though serious, nature.

Against the background that Catherine Bowen presents one can visualize the parsonage in old Cambridge, practically a farmhouse with its accompanying acres. Part of the ground is now covered with several college buildings. In this house the Battle of Bunker Hill was planned. On yonder Green the American soldiers had halted for prayers by the College President as they marched to the field in their struggle to be free. Across the Common was the tree under which Washington had taken command of the Continental Army. Not far off was the old churchyard where in 1837 Uncle Abiel would be laid to rest.

Abiel Holmes had a warm pride in his country, but to him religion came before patriotism. "And now into the new White House at Washington would enter Jefferson, the Virginian, who had written the Declaration of Independence, it was true, but who stood for something far from what John

Adams and most of respectable Boston considered law and order — the common man. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: these were words to be said by men of discretion, men of property — men, thought Abiel, like Judge Wendell and John Lowell, of good sound churches! Men said that Thomas Jefferson was an atheist. Abiel Holmes was an American, but he was also a Calvinist. Now in November, 1800, the thousands who had voted for Jefferson laughed aloud at John Calvin's doctrine of total depravity. How could free men believe such things? Even in Boston one heard the bold question, 'Do you kneel down in church and call yourself a miserable sinner? Neither I nor any of my (Eliot) family will ever do that.' As for the old religion, Abiel did not really fear for it. He was not even frightened by the recent appointment at Harvard of a Unitarian as a professor of Theology!" The best way, thought Abiel, to silence these new creeds was to ignore them. Yet it was good that his son Oliver was entered at Philips Academy at Andover — "a very bulwark of orthodoxy" and Harvard should be safe, though Channing was on the Corporation, for John Kirkland, Abiel's intimate friend, a clergyman, was President. Oliver liked Kirkland, a clergyman who could smile, and that was rare — most of them made Sunday dreary.



**Abiel Holmes**
**From a portrait by Edward Savage**
**Probably painted in 1795**

Abiel thought of himself as a liberal-minded man. Was not one of his best friends William Ellery Channing, who had joined Abiel's church and at his ordination at Federal Street Church, Abiel had delivered the prayer. Abiel exchanged pulpits with many churches in and around Boston; in particular, his sermon on the death of George Washington was oft[illegible] asked for. But lately there had been the deplorable matter of a young woman whom Abiel had been forced to excommunicate from the church for contumacious behavior. It had been one of the most distressing events of his ministry. Abiel had become very stiff-necked and very unhappy. On a Sabbath afternoon in fall service he had given sentence on the transgressor — she should be shunned by all followers of Christ and be prepared to receive more awful sentence at the judgement seat. (One is reminded of the painting "The Black Sheep" by Frances Millett, a similar pathetic subject which hangs in the New Bedford Public Library). Then the sight of the pitiful young person moved him so that he suddenly added, "Unless punishment be prevented by seasonable repentance." At home he locked himself in his study and prayed on his knees for humility and strength. What an awful thing to be banished from God's house! Repentance was essential to both preacher and culprit. The Calvinist preacher, Rev. Abiel Holmes, was changing; his Calvinism was surely being tested. He could not go through with it. In 1801 Abiel, the lonely widower, had taken to wife Sally Wendell, daughter of Judge Wendell, who made life for him extraordinarily pleasant. She had helped him at this hard time by just waiting for him at the meeting house door and taking his arm.

By the time their son Oliver was a senior at Harvard something distressing was happening to his father. There was a controversy in the First Parish — a very serious controversy. The matter concerned his father's refusal to accept the new (Unitarian) doctrines.

To Oliver his father was wholly in the wrong. Abiel now welcomed as exchange preachers only those of strict doctrine with the old-fashioned Calvinist hell-fire in their sermons. His congregation very definitely did not like it and they said so, but even after a polite letter of warning Abiel did not yield an inch and he would not twist words to please his hearers or to keep his flock. Finally came the ultimatum but Abiel remained fanatically stubborn. Next Sunday he would mount his pulpit as always. But on Sabbath evening Abiel heard that another preacher would be there before him. It was the end. Sixty members went with him when he left the First Church, and he and his flock held service in the courthouse on the Square.

Oliver did a great deal of thinking. Though he had not agreed with his father in matters of religion, he was sorry for him. He knew that the last thing he desired was to be a minister. He would like to be an author, a gentleman of letters. Poetry just flowed from his pen, largely about love. But also for all the great events in Boston Holmes, who had been class poet at Harvard, wrote poems for the dinner for Charles Dickens, the dinner after the inauguration of Edward Everett as President of Harvard (he whom Abraham Lincoln had outstripped at Gettysburg with his memorable concise address).

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In 1830, moved by his father's distress, Oliver was so stirred by neglect of the frigate Constitution and the threat to its existence that his passion burst forth into the poem OLD IRONSIDES. His father wept, the verses were sold all over the country, and the Government ordered that Old Ironsides be preserved. Oliver Wendell Holmes, son of Dr. Abiel Holmes, was famous. This was the cousin that my grandmother Sarah Temperance Holmes Wood, was so proud of. Whenever any of us young Woods made a rhyme, as we were wont to do, we used to joke, I fear somewhat triflingly, of being "Cousin Oliver's kin."

Oliver did a great deal of talking as well as thinking, sometimes brilliantly, often to a boresome limit. "If you can find a girl who can shut you up, marry her, Oliver," his brother had said. "Marry her and marry her quick." Suddenly one day he was calling on Miss Amelia Jackson, daughter of a retired Judge of the Supreme Court, who lived in one of the most beautiful houses in town, Oliver knew what his brother meant. Amelia made him stop talking and FEEL. Amelia was quick to respond to Oliver's love letters and on June 15, 1840, "Boston enjoyed a delightful wedding. The guests, leaving their carriages up the hill on Beacon Street, walked down a narrow cobbled street to the pillared portico of King's Chapel." After the ceremony and the collation at Judge Jackson's, Oliver and his bride drove gaily off in the Judge's carriage. In somewhat similar fashion about ten years later, my Grandfather Wood drove his span of horses to North Brookfield to bring his little bride, Sarah Temperance Holmes, to Middleboro to live. "In all her duties, Amelia Jackson Holmes displayed exemplary promptness. Eight months and 28 days after her marriage, she gave birth to a son, who was soon named Oliver Wendell, Jr., he who became Justice of the United States Supreme Court."

Oliver was not merely entertaining Boston with his mirth. By 1837 he had become an M.D., and in 1847, he was named Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the Harvard Medical School. There was a definite unorthodox tendency at Harvard, which no doubt rubbed off on Oliver Wendell. Abiel Holmes, it seems, had raised his boys to believe in the Devil; now people were lost without the Devil to fight; instead they denounced slavery or they frequented hospitals and fought puerperal fever, like Dr. Holmes.

In 1837, Abiel preached a sermon without a suggestion of Calvinism which touched his congregation deeply. Its subject was, "The vanity of life, a reason for seeking a portion of Heaven." In this there was a prophetic note. It was Abiel's last sermon. From January to May Abiel kept fading away with an illness his doctor could not cure.

As for Dr. Holmes at 75, he did not seem a day older than at 55. He had taken to wearing brown suits with a plaid bow tie, bright scarlet and green. Thirty-five years of a black coat every morning to lecture at the Medical School was black enough for one man, he said. He was writing for the Atlantic, had recently got out a new volume of poems, was writing [illegible] long memoir of Emerson. In 1886 he received an honor fro[illegible] Oxford and another from Cambridge — double honor. "On the platform at Oxford, the Doctor looked, the English papers reported, like a small gray-headed boy. The scarlet gown, the pink hood engulfed him." The rafters rang with student cheers. Tears of happiness ran down the cheeks of his daughter Amelia who had accompanied him. But there was sadness in the traveler's return. The Doctor's wife was ill; her mind affected. After two winters, in February of 1888, she died with a sweet smile on her face, which (the Doctor wrote a friend) was like a celestial vision. "For six years Dr. Holmes lingered on, keeping up a valiant daily routine. Every Sunday he managed to get down to King's Chapel for morning service. But in the summer of 1894, he failed visibly. He recovered from a long bout of grippe, but people seeing him taking his customary walk on Beacon Street shook their heads. 'The Doctor is about ready to go,' they said. His son Wendell and his wife Fanny watched the frail old frame day by day as he struggled from his chair. But how bright his eye! On a table by the fire the pearly nautilus shell sat, gleaming with iridescent color.

> Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
> As the swift seasons roll."

Abraham Iincoln had known these verses by heart, and often he was heard to quote, "The last leaf upon the tree."

No doubt the poet-philosopher sensed that the end was near. Suddenly one day in the October dusk he asked his son, "What is it for me, Wendell, King's Chapel?"

"Yes, father."

"All right, then. I am satisfied. That is all I am going to say about it."

A few evenings later he was gone. "The Doctor had been so cheerful," Boston said. "So good to meet on the paths across the Public Garden. He had a real gayety of heart."

At 296 Beacon Street, where Wendell Jr., and his wife Fanny stayed on, the father's presence was everywhere — with the Chambered Nautilus and the first editions of Thackeray, Longfellow, Motley, Emerson, Lowell — all called him friend — with the "Autocrat's" bookplate, "Per Amphiora and Altiora." And "the portrait of Grandfather Abiel smiled over the balustrade, handsome with flowing locks and broad shoulders under the clergyman's white bib . . . His dear young wife had said to him once, "Why are you afraid to be happy? Surely the Lord loves a cheerful heart. People don't have to be dreary to be good." Sally Wendell's views of life persisted in Oliver Wendell. Surely there was nothing dreary about their witty son.

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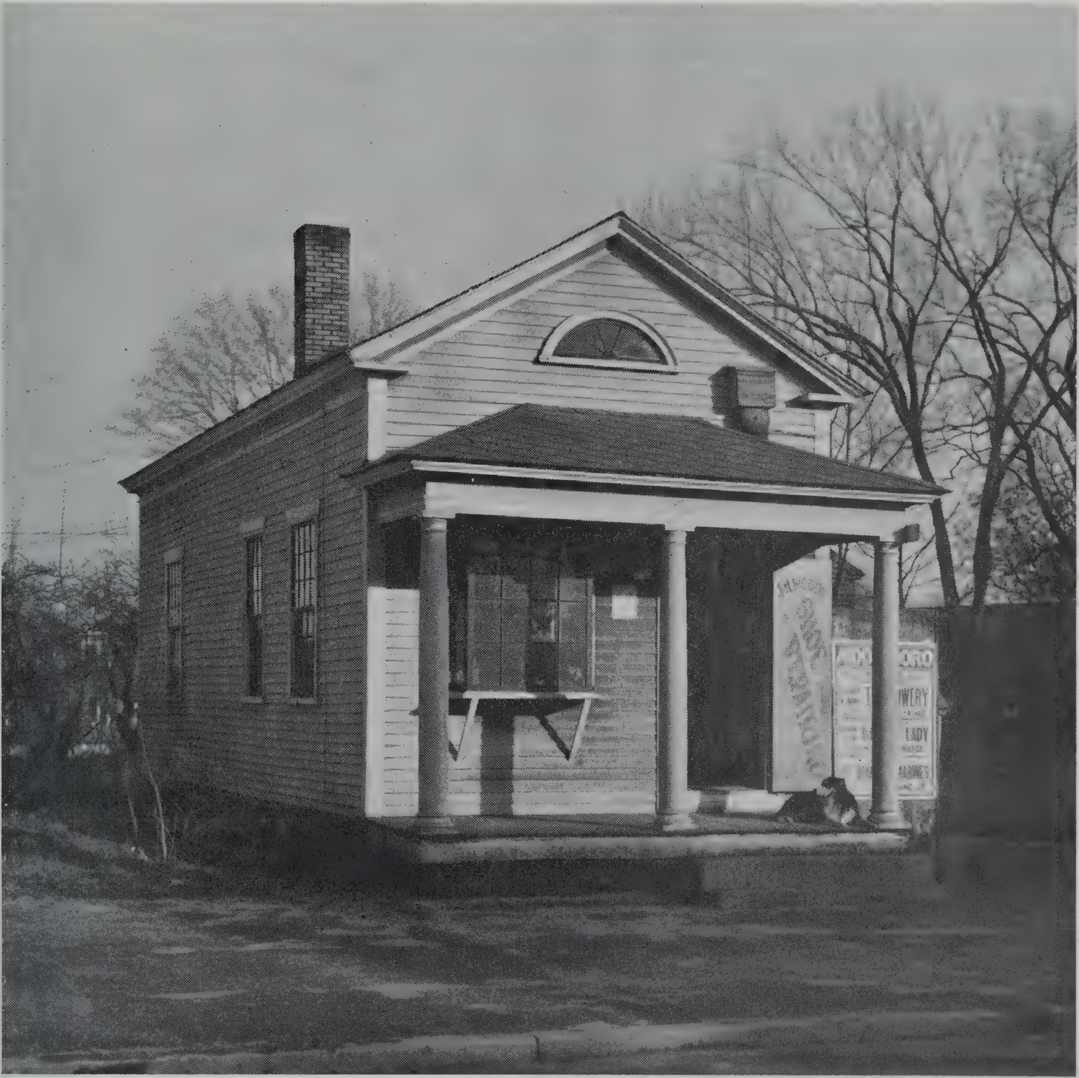

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## THE SMALL SHOP

### Corner of North Main and Jackson Streets

On the northeast corner of North Main and Jackson Streets stood an interesting small building that was apparently built at the same time as was the P. H. Peirce Grocery Store. Statements as to the date this store was founded vary from 1808 to 1826, but in 1919, when the town was celebrating its 250th anniversary, a float entered in the parade by the P. H. Peirce Company carried a banner announcing the year 1919 also marked the 100th anniversary of the store. However, the type of construction and some of the beams seem to indicate an earlier date of construction.

No one seems to know the original purpose of the little building. An early reference states that Major Ethan Earle used it for millinery rooms, possibly in connection with his store at the Four Corners. Another reference alludes to a Dr. Nicholas Hathaway of Fall River having occupied the building. In 1894, two tenants shared the shop: Louis Ritter, maker of custom made boots and shoes, and Peter Fagan, tailor, who will be recalled as always wearing a black patch over one eye. He served in the Civil War and may have received an injury that resulted in the loss of an eye. Mr. Fagan moved his business to Water Street in 1897. Mr. Ritter continued his trade until 1911, when Weston Bros., who carried on a shoe repairing business in a part of the Jenks Building on Wareham Street, removed their business to the shop. In 1921, Jefferson Moody purchased the Weston firm and continued business until 1941, when his entire stock and machinery was purchased by Burnett E. Anderson, who conducted his business elsewhere. The historic little building was then leased for one dollar a month to the Middleboro Varsity Club which moved it to the municipal playground where it was used to house equipment and eventually became absorbed into the playground property, at the present time remodeled and unrecognizable as the former architectural gem it was for nearly one hundred and fifty years.

In 1961, when town workmen were digging a trench in the middle of Jackson Street at the junction with North Main, they uncovered the well of the old town pump, a deep well capped with an unusually large millstone. In the well were two lengths of wooden pipe joined by a wooden coupling. The old wooden pump had been salvaged from the Peirce barn on Jackson Street when that structure was demolished and it is thought likely the pipe and pump were once all of a piece, and that the well was dug in the early 1700's. The millstone may have been brought from some long-ago mill on the Nemasket River to serve as a capstone for the well that provided water for the town pump used by those in the vicinity. Many can recall the stone trough that remained long after the pump was removed in 1919. The millstone, pump and wooden pipes are preserved in the Middleborough Historical Museum.

(From *The History of the Town of Middleboro,* Vol. 2, by Mertie E. Romaine)

## OLD COLONY BOOK ON RESORTS

### Published 1878

Submitted by Rose Standish Pratt

Lakeville, so named because of the extensive and beautiful chain of lakes lying mostly within its borders. The locality is rapidly becoming one of our attractive summer resorts. Assawampsett Pond, three by five miles in extent, surrounded by forests and cultivated fields, is one of the most romantic localities to be found in New England. Its waters abound in all the native varieties of fish, together with the land-locked salmon and black bass. There is a steamer on the lake capable of accommodating upwards of seventy passengers, together with a fleet of sail and row boats for pleasure and fishing. Connected with Assawampsett, as knees and arms and elbows, are Long Pond, one mile wide by seven miles long, Pocksha Pond and the Great Quitticus and Little Quitticus, the three latter united, being about equal in extent to Assawampsett. All these waters abound in the different varieties of fish and afford facilities for extended excursions.

On the borders of Assawampsett are two picnic groves, one at Stony Point and the other at Green Point, furnished with cook houses and small cottages, designed mainly for transient parties. Excellent opportunities are afforded in the vicinity of the ponds for families or clubs who desire to camp out for a season. The forests bordering on these waters still abound in game, and were a favorite resort of the Indians in their time.

> Note: The area now Lakeville was a part of Middleboro until 1853 when it became a separate town. The steamship referred to began the trips at Wareham Street bridge at Middleboro and continued up Nemasket River to the lakes.

**Stony Point, Nelson's Grove**

**Lake Assawampsett**

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XIV 1975 NUMBER 2
Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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# HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE LAWRENCE B. ROMAINE MEMORIAL LIBRARY AT THE MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

by Richard S. Tripp

## I. *Lawrence B. Romaine — A Biographical Sketch*

The Lawrence B. Romaine Memorial Library as well as the Middleborough Historical Museum, where the library is located, is a memorial to a great man. Larry was a man for whom history was not a thick dry tome of dates. He believed in a living history; he believed in museums and exhibits where one could be acquainted with the implements, clothing, furnishings, and other articles of the past, and where these articles could be put together in a meaningful way to tell a story, to make history live.

Larry was most excited when he went through old countrymen's journals, finding out daily events of a farmer's life of two hundred years ago, discovering the price of a barrel of flour, the dimensions of roof timbers newly cut, the contents of an estate. He felt this was the way to have a true understanding of the past.

When he first came to Middleborough Larry engaged in the antique business, being especially interested in tools and hardware. He was prominent in supplying various restorations — Old Sturbridge Village, Williamsburg, and Winterthur being the most prominent — across the country with authentic furnishings and accessories. Eventually Larry specialized in Americana: books, journals, documents, account books, and especially trade catalogs, the latter giving us one of the most accurate accounts of life in a byegone America. In an article "Weathervanes" in the August, 1965, issue of *Better Homes and Gardens,* John Mebane said of Larry, he "probably knows more about and perhaps has possessed more of this country's early American trade and merchandise catalogues than any man alive."

In addition to editing two historical accounts and writing a book of verse, Larry wrote a *Guide to American Trade Catalogues,* a definitive work, the only one of its kind. In addition to founding and editing *The Middleborough Antiquarian,* he also acted as editorial advisor for other national publications. Unfortunately, there were many books in Larry's mind, but there was not enough time to get them out onto paper and into print. He was a man of great energies and activities, and the last seven years of his life were dominated by his work at the Museum.

In 1960, Larry was able to purchase for the sum of one dollar from the town of Middleborough two old mill houses, ca. 1820, once the property of the Peirce estate. Larry, almost singlehandedly, raised money and volunteer help to restore the museum buildings and established exhibits, which at this time include the Tom Thumb collection of memorabilia, a blacksmith's shop, carpenter's shop, cobbler's shop, print shop, country store, costume collection, several period rooms and others.

After Larry's death in 1967, his books, the twenty-two thousand volumes and eight thousand trade catalogs, that were arranged everywhere in his house, lining the walls of horsestalls, the barn, and several outbuildings at Weathercock House, were sent to the University of California at Santa Barbara and set up in the library of the University as the Lawrence B. Romaine Collection. A small collection of his books remain, however, at the Museum in Middleborough. It is this collection that I will describe.

## II. *Memorial Library Building — Its Background*

The Lawrence B. Romaine Memorial Library is housed at the Middleborough Historical Society on Jackson Street. The museum, besides the two 1820 mill houses mentioned above, consists of a replica of an early carriage shed, an old outbuilding from the now-demolished pre-Revolutionary Sproat Tavern, and the small library building.

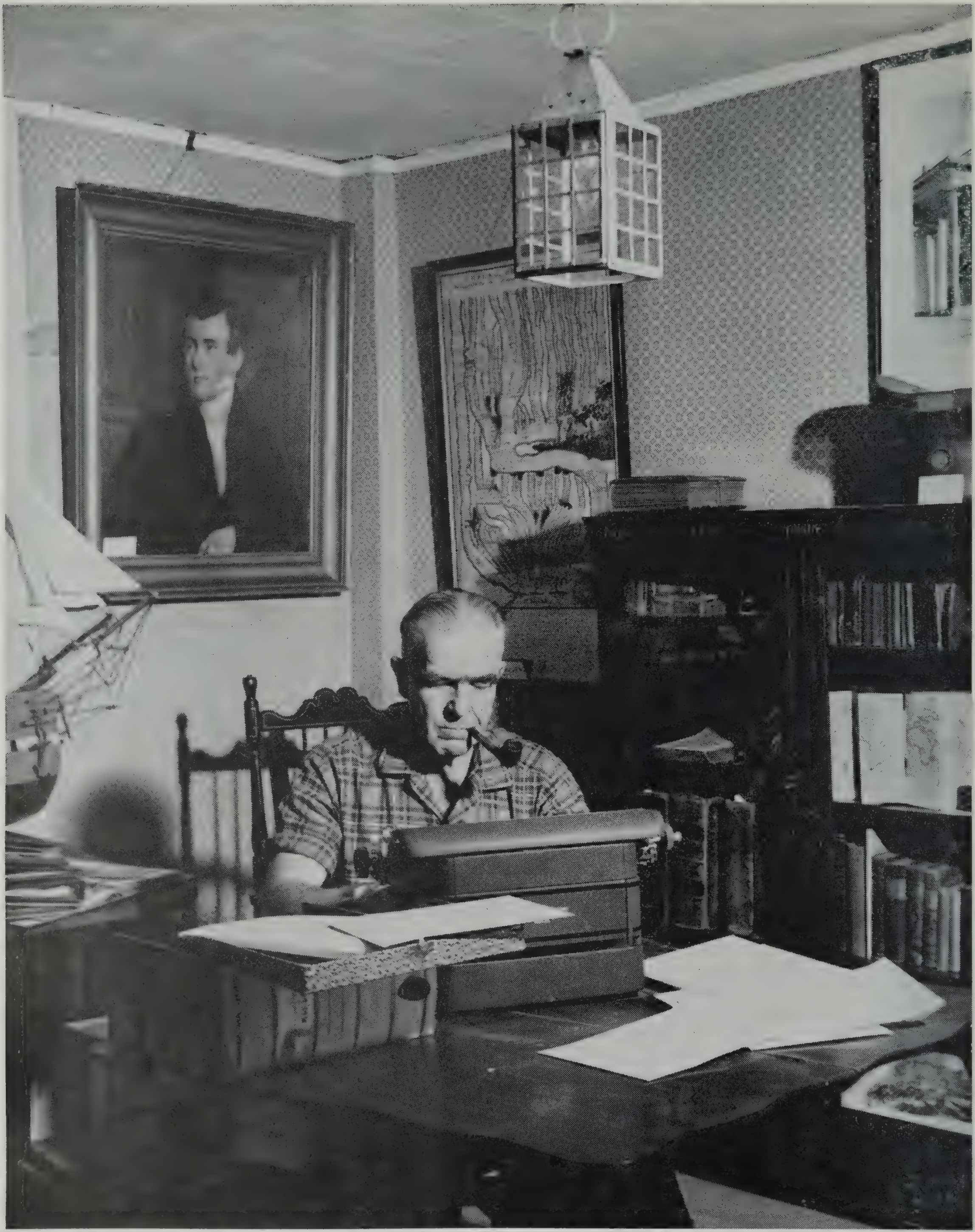
The small white clapboard building with the church-green door once was the law office of Judge Wilkes Wood, and it is believed to have been built sometime around the year 1796. The building was removed to the Museum grounds in 1966.

After studying law in Plymouth, Wilkes Wood became a member of the Bar Association in 1796, and later in his career he was elected president to the Bar Association. He built his law office on the south side of his rambling country home located on South Main Street where a branch of the Middleborough Trust Company now stands.

Mr. Wood became a judge in 1821, and he was a man of great reputation locally having served for two years in the State Senate and as a member of the Electoral College which voted for William Henry Harrison for President. Judge Wood, because of his standing and his tremendous ability as a fine and sensitive lawyer, trained many young aspiring lawyers. His practice and his training of lawyers occurred in his law office. Judge Wood died in 1843 at the age of seventy-three.

More recently the building, on its original site, was a meeting place for troops of girl scouts, and in 1965 the building was donated to the Museum by the family of John Vincent Sullivan, Jr.

The law office-meeting house-library consists of two rooms entered through a heavy green door. One first comes into a small room with a fireplace where many clients were counselled, a bright room with three nicely proportioned windows of twelve-over-twelve lights. The walls are done in clamshell white and the wood trim is a delicate gray, the room being simply furnished with a desk-table, two Windsors and a Hitchcock chair, a hat rack. The collection of law books in the cases flush against the fireplace wall give the room a warmth lent by the richness of many old leatherbound volumes. It is a severe room, but not cold — a masculine and businesslike chamber.



**LAWRENCE B. ROMAINE**

Hard at work on his popular newspaper column, "The Museum Mouse." Taken in what was then the library of the Museum, now a Children's Room. Visible in the picture: whaleship model made by Frederic Atwood; portrait by Cephas Thompson of Major Elisha Tucker of Middleboro; a genealogical tree, "Chronology of Creation from Adam"; photographic bit of the old P. H. Peirce grocery store; and the lighting fixture, gift of the Art Department of the Cabot Club.

The back room is also simple, though larger. It was the inner sanctum of Judge Wood, doubtless, where he trained the young lawyers. The wide pine floorboards are stained a natural color. Floor to ceiling bookcases and cupboards house the Museum's growing library, and there is much in the room to remind one of Larry: a Shaker stove from his barn, his glass collection in a wall display case — much of it from Sandwich — rich scarlet and black curtains from his boyhood home in Morristown, New Jersey, lending dignity to the room, Larry's work table from his office at Weathercock House.

This room has a quiet, serene atmosphere, one where there is a feeling of venerability and strength, a perfect library atmosphere.

### *III. The Library — Its Contents*

The library collection is presently an eclectic one consisting generally of 1.) old Massachusetts law books, 2.) a small collection of documents, 3.) a general collection of early nineteenth century leatherbound books, mostly school texts, 4.) a selection of local newspapers printed in 1865, and 5.) a collection from Larry's personal library of books on everything from patent medicines to walking sticks.

1.) There are approximately 125 volumes of law books or *Massachusetts Reports* which are of the 1856-1885 vintage, books such as one would find in an early law office, giving it an authentic feel. These books are subtitled: *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Judicial Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,* which explains the original use of the books. These reports were edited at various times by a variety of men: Horace Gray, Jr., Octavius Pickering, Charles Allen, and Luther S. Cushing. And while the compilers of these volumes differed, so did the publishers. It is interesting that at various times the volumes were published by Houghton, Osgood and Company and by Little, Brown, and Company, companies still in business, the former presently known as Houghton, Mifflin.

2.) There is a very small collection of non-published material at the library. It includes a large Accounts Receivable ledger dated 1831, simply a listing of names and amounts owed and paid to the business. The name of the business is nowhere inscribed, but it is thought to be an account book from the old Peirce store in the building where the District Court now convenes in Middleborough. One has to admire the thick heavy quality of the paper and the bold fine penmanship of some long forgotten storekeeper.

Other papers include two deeds dated 1799 and 1842, appropriate documents to have on file in a law office, and a collection of letters dated 1823 written by local correspondents.

3.) The collection of approximately forty old books arranged in the front room with the law books, are leatherbound and help to lend an air of erudition to the atmosphere. These books range in time from 1818 to 1850. They are the classical course of study that everyone who went to high school during that time studied: Latin, algebra, modern geography (1839!), literature including *Don Quixote* and an 1818 edition of *The Poetical Works of John Milton,* and *Goldsmith's Roman History* as well as a few books religious in content. This is a fine selection of volumes a young lawyer would need to be familiar with to round out his education and give him something approximating our liberal arts education of today.

4.) A law office demands, of course, that to serve a local public one must be acquainted with the local news. Thirty-seven copies of the *Middleboro Gazette* (published since 1852) which were published in 1865 are to be found in the front room. It is interesting to note that some of our present-day concerns were also subject for interest then. One paper contains a notice regarding the draft advising that in order to avoid being drafted ten more men will have to represent Middleborough and suggesting that all liable men donate ten dollars to be used to hire soldiers to fill the quota.

5.) The books from Larry's personal library at Weathercock House number approximately two hundred. They are books Larry used in his thirty years of antiquing as supplementary guides, more modern guides, to his collection of trade catalogs. This collection covers a wide range within the scope of early industry, folk arts and crafts, and other aspects of early American life. There are books on quilting, toleware, walking sticks, pine furniture, patent medicines, American clocks, firearms, pewter, and toys, and printing, to name a few. Many of these volumes were signed by the authors.

Also in this collection are the four books edited or written by Larry. *Narrative of James Van Horne . . . on the Plains of Michigan* was originally published in 1817 and shows the hardships, privations, and sacrifices of the men who have come to be known as the backbone of the country, the common man who struggled to advance himself and at the same time stabilized his country. *From Cambridge to Champlain —March 18 to May 15, 1776, A Manuscript Diary* was privately printed in 1957 and is a diary of an unknown Revolutionary soldier telling interesting everyday events in the life of a soldier.

*The Weathercock Crows* is a book of original verse that gives one an insight into the everyday life, the joys and frustrations, of a country bookman and is a delightful autobiographical sketch of Larry himself. But, in its own way, even more biographical is Larry's last work, *A Guide to American Trade Catalogs,* 1744-1900. It is the only work of its kind, a most comprehensive listing of trade catalogs and where they may be found in private or public collections, each one being annotated. This volume has great value in the technical field of the research of early American industries, as such catalogs are used for authenticity in the writing of books, movie scripts, and in the setting up of museum exhibits. As mentioned above, Larry's personal collection of some eight thousand trade catalogs is now owned by the University of California. At the time of his death, Larry was working on a supplementary listing of catalogs, his first volume having elicited the whereabouts of thousands of additional trade catalogs in existence. This work was not completed.

The entire contents of the Memorial Library have been cataloged according to Dewey by Mrs. Mertie Romaine, who was for many years the Librarian at the Middleborough Public Library. There are subject, title, and author cards done in a shortened version without collation and imprint. Mrs. Romaine felt the smallness of the library and the easy accessability to the materials did not warrant a full technical card.

### *IV. Conclusion*

The library described here does not contain all of the old and rare books held by the Middleborough Historical Society,

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but rather a selection of Larry Romaine's personal collection. To this time there has not been as much use made of the library by local people as by out-of-town individuals. Mrs. Romaine, museum Curator, has hopes that in the near future there will be a greater interest in and use made of the library.

### *Afterword*

After reading this paper over, I realize it is in violation of one of the principles of formal writing: it is most informal. But there is a very good reason for this: Larry was a very warm, outgoing person, not at all formal — and to anyone who knew him at all well he was never Mr. Romaine, he was always Larry.

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## TWO VALUED GIFTS TO THE HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Mrs. Margaret (Wood) Hayward, a former resident of Webster Street, Middleboro and now of Glen Ridge, New Jersey, has presented the Museum with a portrait of Lucy Nichols Cushing Wood, wife of Judge Wilkes Wood whose 18th Century law office stands on the grounds of the Museum. Mrs. Wood was born in Scituate, Massachusetts, October 6, 1787; married Judge Wood September 27, 1827; died in Middleboro September 26, 1848. The portrait now hangs in Judge Wood's law office. Since the Museum has been established, Mrs. Hayward has presented many interesting and valuable gifts. Accompanying the portrait of Mrs. Wilkes Wood was a beautifully wrought sampler by the same Lucy Cushing when she was nine years old in 1796.

The second gift is a very unusual piece of furniture, a secretary-desk, made of cherry wood, of the Empire period and sometimes called a Napoleon desk. The only other known desk of the kind is to be found in the John Quincy Adams House in Quincy, Massachusetts. This valuable piece of furniture was presented by Mrs. Ella Gray of Milton, Massachusetts, whose grandfather brought the desk from France in 1860. Mrs. Gray's ancestors built the Sampson house on Plymouth Street, North Middleboro, more recently known as the "Dr. Ham" place.

## SOMETHING DIFFERENT

LYMAN BUTLER

Just for a variation from articles I have had in the past, this time I am writing something on a little different line — taking certain buildings still in existence, or perhaps long gone, and try to see how many different occupants over the years I can remember.

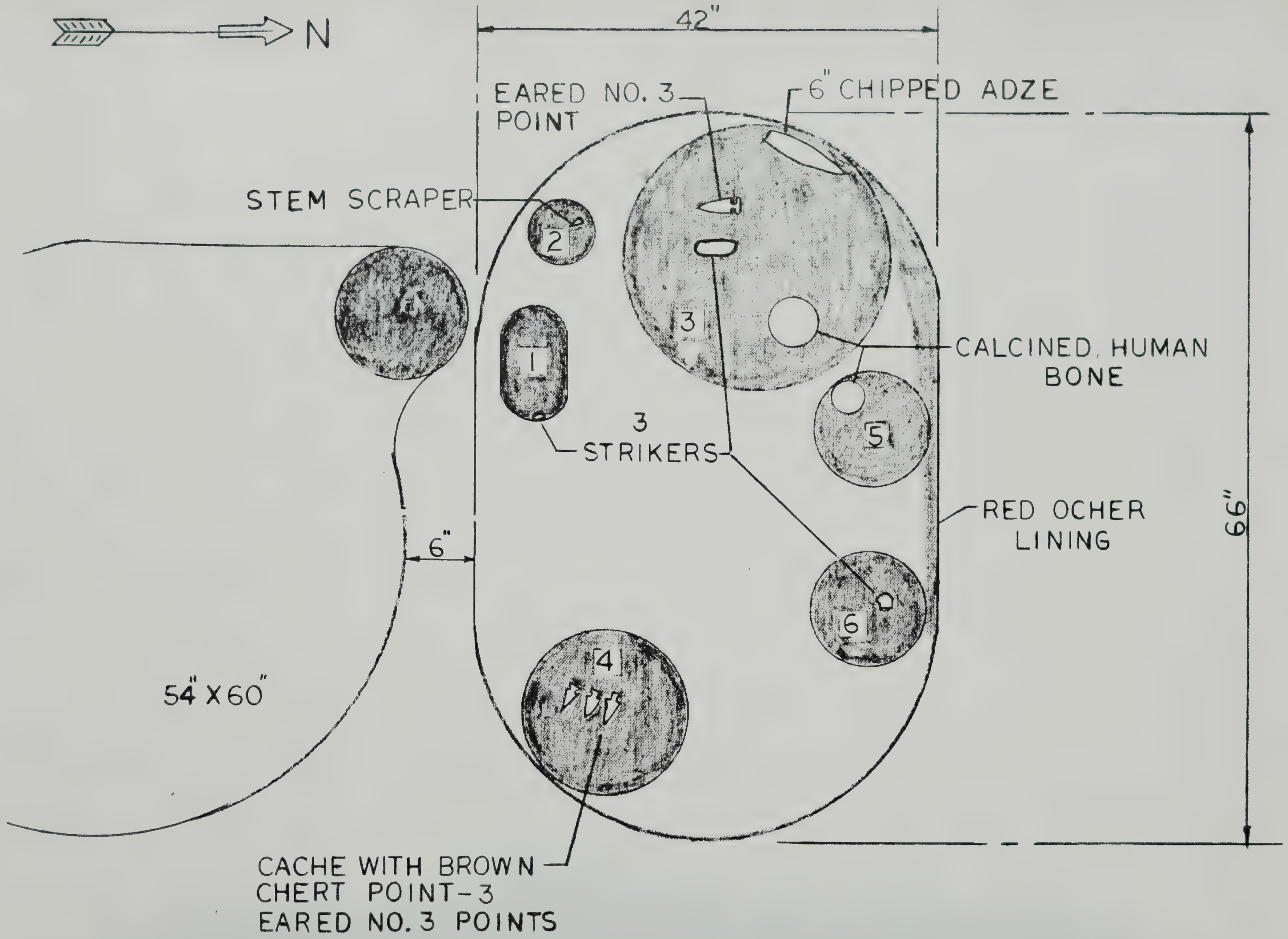
First, the old Jones Bros. Block on North Main Street. For a long time this building had a furniture store on the first floor, among them the Jones Bros., William Barden Furniture, and Wells Furniture. Then came Tom Panesis' Grocery Store and Market, Harold Cleverly's Market that is now Marzelli's. The B&M Auto Supply also occupied a part of the lower floor, space now used by a restaurant. Upstairs was the Owl's Hall and the Nemasket Grange met here for many years. On the second floor small rooms were used as a meeting place for Jehovah's Witnesses, as well as the Nemasket Radio Club. The Empire Band practiced here and at one time there was a toy business. For several years the third floor was headquarters for the Business Mens Club until, after a fire in the Jones Block, the Club purchased the J. Herbert Cushing residence on the corner of Oak and Center Streets.

The Glidden Building, on the opposite corner, which was the Sullivan Building, has had on the lower floor only one occupant in the years I can remember — A. R. Glidden & Sons, later carried on by the sons, and now by a grandson with the help of one of the dads. In other parts of the building were E. F. Tinkham's Jewelry Store, later Emil Robinson's, and Pasztor & Klar Bakery and Ice Cream store. The jewelers were both long tenants, and later came Thelma's Home Cooking, and home cooking by the sisters, Mrs. Reed and Mrs. Goodridge. The Daisy Do-nut Shop was located here and a bakery operated by Jack Hayes who used to be baker for Pasztor & Klar. There was a restaurant owned by Neil Harrington, eventually taken over by Gardner Brown; a barbershop operated by Joe Wright and by his son, Crawford; and Neville & Lavallee's Real Estate Office.

I remember the building where Sears Roebuck is now located as the Sparrow Brothers Clothing Store. After the clothing store went out of business, there was a Stop & Shop Market. Sears, the present occupant, moved over from the A & P Building on the corner of Thatcher's Row and Center Street. The building next door, which I knew as the Jesse Morse Building, was always a drug store, first Mr. Morse, then DeForest, and now Craig's Rexall Store. Of course Myron Hinckley for years had a jewelry store in this building until he recently moved farther down the street.

Tripp's Waiting Room was another place that kept the same occupant for many years until torn down recently. This is also true of Tom Panesis' Fruit Store and the Middleboro Clothing Company, both still doing business.

Shurtleff Hardware Store on South Main Street has always carried the same type of goods. It was previously owned by J. & Geo. E. Doane. Everett Square way, Tom Boucher still carries on the paint and wall paper business begun by his father. Next door, Fred White had a shoe store where about all my shoes came from as a youngster. Later it was taken over by a Mr. Fish, then by a man named Viera, and now is Dom's Appliance Store. Farrar's has remained the same except for some alterations.


N
42"
EARED NO. 3 POINT
6" CHIPPED ADZE
STEM SCRAPER
2
1
3
CALCINED, HUMAN BONE
3 STRIKERS
5
RED OCHER LINING
66"
6"
6
4
54" X 60"
CACHE WITH BROWN CHERT POINT-3 EARED NO. 3 POINTS
PIT NO. 10

PLAN-RED PAINT PIT NO. 12
FIGURE NO. 17

## A CREMATION BURIAL COMPLEX AT TITICUT

by WILLIAM B. TAYLOR

*Conclusion of Part IV*

Secondary Deposit No. 6 — Pit No. 12, had a 10 inch diameter, also, and occurred beside Deposit No. 5 at a depth of about 30 inches at the pit's bottom. Here, in a layer of ocher a Strike-a-light set was recovered. It consisted of a felsite Striker, its sides coated with the decomposed remains of a pyrites block. (See Fig. No. 15)

See Fig. No. 17 for outline of Burial Pit No. 12 showing location of the various features and artifact arrangement. Shaded areas represent red ocher.

Burial Pit No. 13 was the last to be uncovered at a spot a short way removed from Pit No. 12 between the boundary line and the Dunn crematory. Located beneath a large pine thrown on top of the dump, it had an oval shape of about 24 by 46 inches and reached down to a depth of 43 inches, which was in fact 16 inches into the white sand. A pink colored mixture of sand and ocher filled its upper section to a depth of 24 inches, then no ocher at all until a 40 inch depth had been reached, then 3 inches of ocher. Scattered throughout were charcoal flecks and 14 fragments of calcined human bone. Near the bottom an Eared No. 3 felsite point and a felsite Striker, but with no coating on it of decomposed pyrites, were recovered. At the same depth in the pit's center a yellowish-orange discoloration was noted about 4 by 8 inches in size and 3 inches thick. This may have been the decomposed remains of the pyrites block, which belonged to the Striker. In it appeared 4 Eared No. 3 points — one was fractured — all fire scorched and heavily coated with the same orange substance of the discolored area. (See Fig. No. 18.)

Fig. #18 Striker and four eared No. 3 points from Pit No. 13. At right is felsite flake from Pit No. 9.

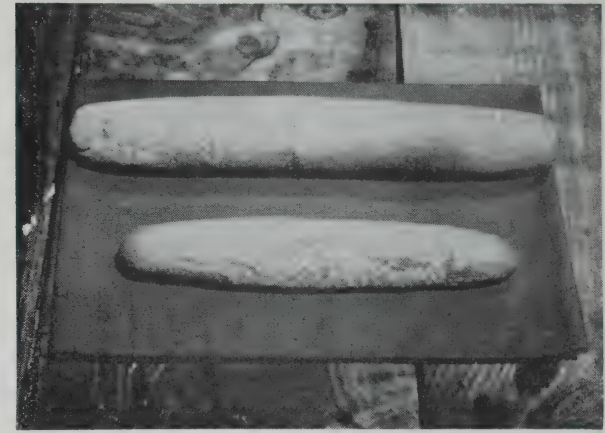


Fig. #13 Two Late Archaic pestles found in Pit No. 10. Worn bit ends show extensive usage.

Fig. #15 At top are two Strikers from Deposit No. 1 and No. 6 with Stem scraper (center) from Deposit No. 2, No. 12. Bottom shows three Eared No. 3 points found in Deposit No. 4, Pit No. 12.

# TWIGS & BRANCHES

of

Olde Middleborough

in

Plymouth County

Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

The first Federal census taken in the United States was taken in 1790. By this time Middleborough had become a thriving community. In 1790 there were 802 families, 1,166 free white males over 16 years of age, including the male heads of households. Middleborough had 1,050 free white males under 16 years of age and 2,286 free white females including the heads of households. Listed also were 24 other free persons. The total count for residents of Middleborough in 1790 was 4,526 persons.

The Revolutionary War was over and the colonies had banded together and the Constitution of the United States had been adopted. The listings for the census taking in 1790 were somewhat vague since the enumerations is entirely by groupings. Free white males over 16 years of age, including the heads of households, does not help in any way to determine if a listing of three males in this column is to be interpreted as a father and two sons over the age of 16 . . . or is it 3 brothers , all of whom are over 16 . . . or it could be a man, his brother-in-law, and his nephew. The primary importance of a 1790 census record is that it establishes the town where families of certain surnames lived. The only full name ( given and surname ) that is in the 1790 census is that of the person who was considered the head of a household.

In some areas the census takers filed alphabetized records. This arrangement assists if one is making a quick check of an area to determine if a certain surname was present. However, in many instances the record filed was just as the census taker took the listings, up one street and down the other, a house-to-house canvas. To those who are interested in genealogy this door-to-door listing is frequently of assistance in establishing families and in determining relationships.

Spelling was unique and much of it was phonetic . . . that is, the way the name sounded to the census taker. Our flat New England and Boston accent . . . as we natives of Massachusetts pronounce words . . . accounts for many of the very odd and peculiar spellings. Spellings such as Homes for Holmes; Washbun for Washburn or Washborne; Moss for Morse and other differences are very common in all of the early records.

Many names familiar to us as first settlers at Middleborough also appear in the first census of 1790 . . . Tinkham, Wood, Weston, Vaughn and many others . . . thereby indicating that the family . . . or some branch of it . . . continued to reside in the town of Middleborough.

The old Sproat Tavern is a familiar name even today to those of us who have an interest in the past. Yet . . . the Sproats who lived in Middleborough and are listed in the 1790 census are given the spelling Sprout. The Eddy families w[illegible] were in Middleborough in 1790 used both the Eddy and Eddey spelling. Sometimes these variant spellings were the result of the census taker's lack of proficiency in spelling. Not everyone . . . in fact, relatively few . . . in the colony or in Middleborough itself . . . had received much schooling and it is quite possible that the person himself did not properly spell his own name. The noted Isaac Backus who preached in North Middleborough . . . first at the Congregational Church and then at the Baptist Church, which he founded . . . is listed in the 1790 census as Isaac Backhus and living next door is Simeon Back hus on the one side and Solomon Beale on the other. Living next to Simeon Backhus or Backus is an Abraham Tisdell, then Wm. Pratt and David Gurney. Just knowing a few names of area residents and a general location of where they lived enables one to pinpoint a location and realize that the enumeration is for the old Titicut Parish. Today we are more apt to call the section North Middleborough and use the modified spelling, Middleboro. Both the Backus house which was later occupied by a nephew, Isaac Perkins, but has now become a two-family house and the Gurney home just around the corner from Plymouth Street, on Pleasant Street are still standing and have not had too much exterior alteration. The Gurney home was the old parsonage of the North Congregational Church and later became the home of Augustus Pratt . . . and is now occupied by A. Kingman Pratt.

Next to the Gurney family appears the name of Anna Dillis who has only herself listed . . . no other persons in the household. According to the History of Middleborough Miss Anna Dilley was a school teacher who "lived in the schoolhouse surrounded by an orchard near to the residence of Deacon Abiel Wood." Without doubt Anna Dillis is Anna Dilley but without further verification it is questionable which is the proper spelling of the surname.

As everyone knows it is frequently very difficult to reconstruct an area or neighborhood. Too many changes . . . a house torn down, a new one built where there used to be an orchard or field . . . a front porch added, an old small-paned window replaced.

If Anna Dillis is Anna Dilley . . . we can speculate as to the schoolhouse she lived in . . . but the Pratt Free School of today seems much too big for a lone woman and the Pleasant Street or Plymouth Street schools too distant. Furthermore, we didn't walk the route with the census taker. Obviously he could not have covered all the territory in one day and consequently we have no way of knowing how systematic he was . . . he may not have been at all systematic and started out the next day in the opposite direction.

It is also a bit interesting and perhaps a bit provocative . . . the surname Dilley or Dillis (whichever it is) does not appear in any other locality in the 1790 census. This is the only listing in the state of Massachusetts.

Delving into history of towns and of families presents some interesting problems for those of us who like to go digging for facts. Trying to recreate home locations in 1972 as they existed in 1790 is not an easy task. But it is the sort of activity that keeps a Historical Society on its toes.

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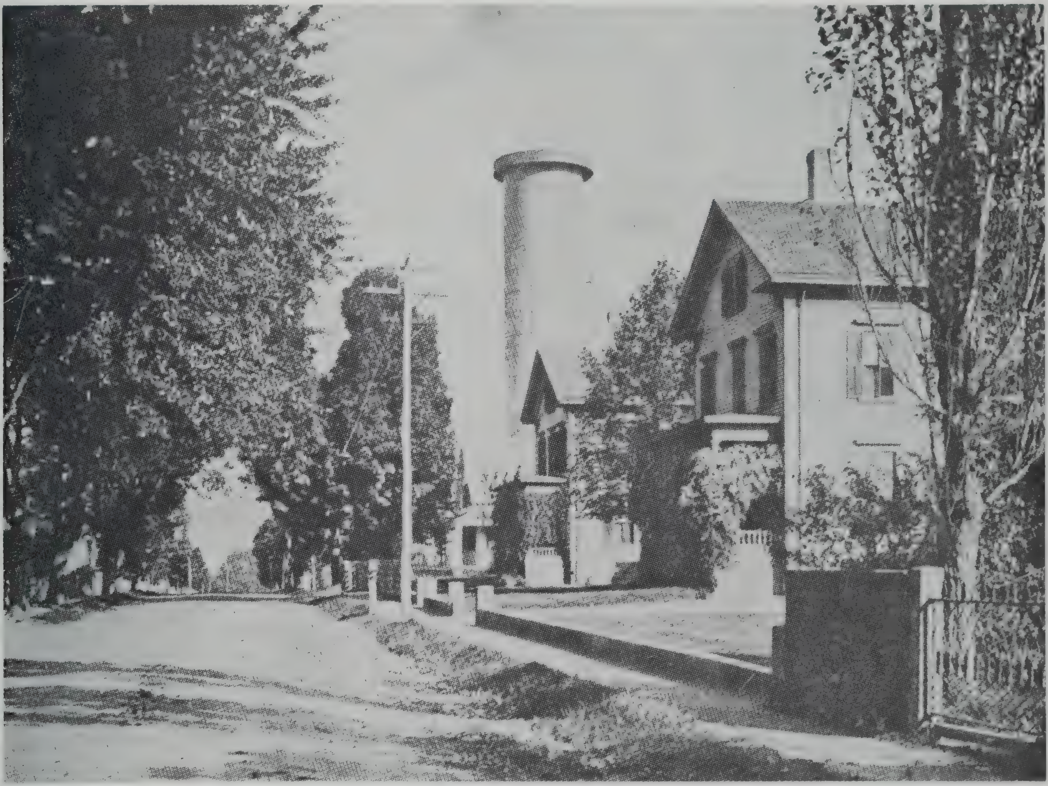

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

of

Olde Middleborough

in

Plymouth County

Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

Middleborough like most older communities has many names for the very old sections of town, the ponds and rivers also. The Indians were original settlers here and many of the names . . . both official and unofficial . . . reflect this Indian background. The largest pond in the area was . . . in the old records . . . described to be "the largest collection of water in Massachusetts." Known today as Assawampsett Pond it has previously been spelled in many different ways such as Assowamsett, Assawamsett, Assawampsitt or Sowampsett. An early writeup of the pond said that its length from North to South "being about six miles, its breadth in some places nearly four miles; but the width is very variant. At one place, called Long Point, in the summer, the width is not more than three rods." Other ponds are Long Pond, Quitticus, Quiticasset, Pocksha and Pockanina.

The Indians gave the names to the ponds. Assawampsett is from two Indian words, 'assah' meaning 'stone' and 'wamsah' meaning 'white' with the ending 'et' meaning 'the place of' . . . which when combined and translated means 'the place of the white stone.' It is surmised that the Indians named it from the white pebbles found along the beach.

About 1747 it was discovered that there was an iron-mine at the bottom of the large pond known as Assawampsett. The men of the community would go out in boats and bring up the ore from the bottom of the pond for use in the furnaces and forges of the area.

The outlet for the ponds is the Nemasket River, also an Indian name. The derivation of Nemasket is not fully established but probably was Wampanoag for 'at the fishing place.' Some have claimed it meant 'grassy land.' At any rate, the name was affixed to a river at the section where the Indians lived. The various settlements were considered as the residences of the several Indian tribes of the area, which were the divisions or groupings within the Wampanoag tribe. Wampanoag meaning 'people from the east' was the major tribe within the Plymouth-Nantucket-Martha's Vineyard area. Actually it was a confederacy of several sub-groups such as the Nemasket. The Indian nation was known as Pokanoket and it was composed of all of these eastern Indians who lived in Plymouth and Bristol counties as well as on Cape Cod. Pokanoket meant 'at the cleared lands.'

Indian place names are like many of our surnames . . . they are descriptive of the area in which these particular Indians lived. Each of the major Indian Nations had its own language and each tribe within its nation had its language, often similar but never completely identical.

The word Agawam is also Indian and here in Plymouth county it was the old Indian name for Wareham. The word means 'low land' or 'land overflowed by water.' Another meaning was 'place to unload canoes' and these same meanings are for the town of Agawam in Hampden county, Massachusetts, not far from Springfield.

The Indians were victims of the plague but strangely enough the Nemaskets whose lands were Middleborough had far fewer deaths than the surrounding regions.

The early history of the Pilgrims tell of trips to Middleborough, or Nemasket and of the pleasant relations with the Indians. The Indians were generous with their food and taught the English how to raise the food and also how to cook it. Bradford in his book "Of Plimouth [Plymouth] Plantation" and others writing of this early period of Plymouth history tell of journeys to Middleborough and elsewhere and of stopping for the night with the Indians who fed and housed them. It was the Indians who taught the early settlers that a fish planted in a corn hill would serve as fertilizer and help to produce a better crop.

The Indians were not always friendly to each other and indirectly the early settlers often became involved in the difficulties within the tribe or between the tribes. Lands were an important possession to the Indians and the Nemaskets of Middleborough had their own fishing spots and hunting grounds. In the North Middleborough or Titicut area there was a place on the Taunton River known as the 'Old Indian Wear' [usually spelled weir today.] This probably was situated in the area granted to Elizabeth Poole and her associates and which later became Taunton.

To read about the Indians, the area where they lived, their habits, their customs and their culture is something which I particularly enjoy. We often hear the expression that America is a melting pot of people, of races, religions and culture. It was no less true in the mid 1600's when the land of the Nemasket became the town of Middleborough. It is interesting to note that the Wampanoags have retained more of their original background than any other of the New England Indian tribes.

Basketry, moccasins, warpaint, headresses are some of the outward signs that identify an Indian tribe and our own Middleborough Historical Association in its own museums has some baskets and other belongings of our local Indians.

Middleborough's background . . . even in the early days . . . was truly a melting pot since the settlers came in from all directions. Many a Middleborough native has a fairly easy task if he or she wishes to join the Mayflower Society. Yet there are many others whose ancestry is deeply rooted in Middleborough families but who do not have a drop of Mayflower blood. Tracing your family history can become a journey into the history of several communities, give you an acquaintance with a trade or skill you previously knew little of, and a liberal education in the life of the pioneers. Sometimes you can be very surprised in what you learn . . . that an ancestor graduated from Harvard College in the late 1600's or early 1700's

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.

VOLUME XIV 1973 Number 3

Mertie E. Romaine ... Editor

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. . . . that someone in the family was an early portrait painter, a minister, a tombstone carver. And, of course, it is possible that the old family folktale could be proved true or untrue . . . that there is or there isn't some Indian blood. Families often migrated to a new location in groups and frequently the groups were related through inter-marriages with the various families. Oldtime Middleborough of the late 1600's did not have the same boundaries as the Middleborough of 1750 . . . and even later the formation of Brockton from old North Bridgewater involved families with Middleborough roots. The background of Halifax, Taunton, Stoughton and Easton is interwoven with old and more recent Middleborough. It is like the tangled skeins of colors for a tapestry. Weaving is an art and uses all the colors to gain the beauty and symetry of the finished rug. So each town is strengthened and built from the contributions made by the people of its neighbor towns.

## QUESTION BOX

I seek ancestors of Mary Rider (father, Samuel Rider, married Mary Chapman 1721-1795) who married Nathan Peirce (Abiel Ebenezer Abraham). Samuel and Mary (Chapman) Rider's children: James, Samuel, Zerviah, Elisha, David, Jonathan, Robert, Joanna, Nathaniel, Rebecca and Mary (Mercy). Betty Quibell Brandt, 7403 Irvine Ave., North Hollywood, Calif. 91605.

## NOTES

In addition to the picture of pupils of the Green School which is included in this issue, and in which the late Miss Dorothy Fessenden appears, Miss Fessenden bequeathed to the Middleborough Historical Museum a school bell used at the Green School as far back as 1861 and until it was closed in 1941; a photograph of General and Mrs. Tom Thumb, a hand carved letter rack made by her uncle, Harry LaPorte; and a very fine mantel clock in working condition.

With this issue, we are happy to welcome two new advertisers to the pages of the Antiquarian, both having served their patrons for one hundred years and more. A. R. Glidden & Son is celebrating this year the 100th year of the founding of the business. After having operated one hundred years under the ownership of the Thatcher family, H. L. Thatcher & Co., Inc., is now under new ownership, but serving Middleboro and the surrounding area in the same dependable way it has served for the past century.

When the by-laws of the Middleborough Historical Association were revised the past year, provision was made for an Antiquarian Committee to act in an advisory capacity and to aid in soliciting material for the publication. The Executive Board has appointed the following committee: Mrs. Lawrence B. Romaine, Mrs. Charles D. Townsend, and Miss Mildred A. Ashley. Already the committee has embarked on a project — compiling an index to the Antiquarian. In 1962, an index was published for the first four volumes; since then there have been ten more volumes. Subscribers include the Boston and New York Public Libraries and similar institutions. To make the best use of the Antiquarian in reference work an index is essential.

## TEMPLE PLACE AND THATCHER'S ROW

by Lyman Butler

There are few people around today who can remember the thirty-five foot right of way called Temple Place which was purchased when the first Central Baptist Church was built in 1828 with funds supplied by Major Levi Peirce. Mr. Peirce also financed the building of Peirce Academy which was named in his honor. The church was built on similar lines of the Central Congregational Church although that church was not built until 1847. The Baptist Church, as many may have seen it pictured, faced South Main Street and had wagon sheds built in the rear. Since it faced South Main Street, the logical entrance to the church was from that direction, hence the thirty-five foot right of way called Temple Place which led directly from South Main Street to the church. The plot on which the Baptist Church was built also included the little triangle of lawn in front of the Episcopal Church which was relinquished when Union Street was cut through the property.

Temple Place remained in use until the first Baptist Church was destroyed by fire in 1888. Temple Place is still owned by the Baptist Society and extends from Thatcher's Row to South Main Street encompassing a part of the Unitarian Church lawn.

Until 1907, there was a house on the lot where the Unitarian Church now stands, owned by a Parker family. This house was moved to North Middleboro when the Unitarian Church was brought from Pearl Street and located on the corner of South Main and Nickerson Avenue. The Park Theatre was built on land purchased from the Thatcher Estate. Permission was granted to the theatre to allow their patrons to cross Temple Place to enter the theatre. Thatcher's Print Shop was also granted right of way for delivery trucks to bring supplies to the business.

Thatcher's Row, which many people may have thought a public way, was not public until 1950 when the Baptist Society deeded it to the town, which since then has kept it in fine condition.

Temple Place was discontinued with the building of the second Central Baptist Church. There were two entrances to the church, one from Town House Avenue, now Nickerson Avenue, and one from Thatcher's Row, the one mostly used.

In 1959, the name of the theatre was changed to Middleboro Theatre and operated under that name as long as it was in existence. Several attempts were made to continue moving pictures there, but failed and finally the Baptist Society purchased the building and is now using part of it for the young people of the town, a youth center which they call "The Keyhole." After one hundred and forty-five years, the Baptist Society has the use of much of the original Temple Place.

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Thatcher's Print Shop was the first building built on the Row and second was a large building facing Center Street and parallel to the Row, a grocery store occupied by Lucas and Thomas. These were built after the 1855 map was made of the town as they are not shown on that map. Later three more buildings were constructed on the Row. These have had various tenants over the years but were almost always occupied by a business downstairs and apartments upstairs. At present next to the Print Shop is Crawford Wright's barbershop; in the next building a lunch and do-nut shop; then the Flower Cart. In later years, a small building was erected on the corner of Thatcher's Row and Temple Place, first used by Irving Dunham and Forrest Long as a radio shop, and for several years past by Helen's Beauty Shop.

In 1931 Peirce Academy was demolished and the land sold to the Federal Government for the present Post Office. In the early days, Temple Place was flanked by a row of elm trees and a neat wooden fence on the south side adjacent to what was then Washburn Street, then Town House Avenue, and finally Nickerson Avenue, named for a local boy, Simeon Nickerson, killed in World War I. As originally laid out, the street extended from South Main Street through to Pearl Street. That was before Union Street was cut through. If you stand in front of the Central Congregational Church and look toward the Baptist Church, you can quite readily visualize the layout of Temple Place.

I wish to thank G. Ward Stetson, Senior Deacon of the Baptist Church, and Deacon Robert Whittaker for much of the information contained in this article.

The Parker House, located on the corner of South Main Street and Nickerson Avenue (then Washburn Street). In 1834, the land was deeded by Abiel Washburn (who had a house about where Soldier's Monument now is) to Dr. Arad Thompson, one of Middleboro's early physicians, who built the house, later purchased by Oliver Parker. In 1907, the house was moved to North Middleboro, opposite Caswell's Store, when the Unitarian Church building was moved from Pearl Street to its present location.

## NEW MUSEUM DIRECTOR

Mr. G. Ward Stetson has been appointed to serve as Director of the Middleborough Historical Museum. Mr. Stetson is uniquely qualified to fill this position having an extensive knowledge of Middleboro history, a deep interest in early artifacts, and experience in museum work through his association with the Eddy Museum at Eddyville. We are indeed fortunate to have a person so well qualified to direct the operation and the activities of the Historical Museum.

## A UNIQUE GIFT TO THE HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Through the courtesy of the Town Manager, Anders Martenson, Jr., the Museum has been presented with a set of brass oilers and pourers which have been used at the East Grove Street Pumping Station in all probability since it was built in 1885. These utensils were used on the original water pump in the pumping station. The set consists of five pieces all of highly polished brass and placed on a special oval tray with an indentation for each piece. As the set rests in its tray on the wooden stand that accompanied the gift, the graceful handles and long spouts for pouring give the appearance of a very handsome tea set — a valuable and interesting addition to the Museum.

## CAPTAIN DREW HOUSE

### North Main Street

The Captain Drew House

Where now stands the modern fire station on North Main Street once stood the homestead of Captain Edwin Drew, a commander of sailing vessels during the Civil War. The house was originally built owned by Allen Shaw, one of the early druggists of the town. Captain Drew's son, Elmer O. Drew was a well-known antique dealer; there was also a son, Stephen, and a daughter, Elizabeth. The small white house was moved in 1925 and placed on the corner of Frank and Shaw Streets. The large barn on the property was moved at the same time to the Pierce Playground and converted into a field house, recently burned.

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## A CREMATION BURIAL COMPLEX AT TITICUT

by William B. Taylor

Part 6

### CONCLUSION

The custom of cremating the dead seems to have been an important function of early man, extending over a long period of occupation in the central regions of New England. During the last sixteen years, cremation burial remains have been discovered at nine different sites from eastern Massachusetts to central Rhode Island. Radiocarbon dates from three of these sites prove this custom existed for more than a milennium, from 4700 down to 3500 years ago. Further, by a typological estimate based on artifact recoveries from Burial Pit #6 at the Seaver Farm, it appears that cremating the dead still being practiced as late as A.D. 500. It seems probable that arrival of the Adena influence may have been the factor that prolonged ritualistic burial observance beyond that of the Late Archaic and on into the Age of Ceramics.

During such a long period of time — approximately 3000 years — much could have happened to alter the burial ritual. Therefore, it is not surprising to find different types of grave goods at each of the cremation burial sites, although certain similarities are noticeable. These modifications probably were determined by independent creative impulses of a long line of shaman priests.

All sites had red ocher in varying amounts, except for Swan Hold and Flat River, while some, not all, had calcined human bone fragments, and all had charcoal deposits of some kind.

Now that 13 burial pits at the Seaver Farm have been uncovered, partly surrounding Dunn's crematory, it is evident that a burial complex existed at this site, very similar to that at the Mansion Inn Site in Wayland. At both of these locations a number of pits — presumably secondary burials — encircled a central crematory with a concentration of charcoal, calcined human bone, and burned stone implements. Beyond this, what further can be said about it? One fact stands out quite clearly, that a substantial quantity of red powdered ocher had been used. Furthermore, it was observed that in pits #2, 12 and 13, which yielded grave goods, an excessive amount of sand had become mixed with ocher, changing its usual deep red color to a pinkish shade. In explanation of this, tests have shown that water leaching in such pits, if passage is not blocked by some impediment, will cause this mixing to take place. On the other hand, the ocher in pits #1,4,5, and 9, with little or no grave goods, tended to have a brilliant red color — an exception was pit #10, which had both brilliant ocher and many grave goods. Might this not mean that the first group of pits remained open longer than the last, before being back-filled, which allowed more sand and ocher mixing from weathering? This, then, might suggest that the first group with grave goods was attended by ceremonies extending perhaps for several days, during which they remained open, while the pits of the latter group were soon filled in.

Another observation noted was that there appeared to be no uniform pattern for the deposit of grave goods. A few lay outside the secondary deposits, as though added as an afterthought, while other lay inside. Moreover it was noted that those artifacts found in the deposits had been carefully placed. For, when they were not lying flat, they were either on edge, or with their points sticking up or down, as previously described. What meaning, if any, such special placement had is open to speculation, but at least it should indicate calculated intent, rather than random action on the part of the shaman performing the ceremony.

Perhaps one of the most important interpretations of the evidence, as for any excavation, is that which deals with ferreting out the age of the remains. At this site, lacking radiocarbon analysis of charcoal from the pits, the next best indicator is to be had through typological analysis of the artifacts involved. And here fortune stepped in to make the going easier, for all projectile points found in pits having points nearby the crematory, namely pits #3,10, 11, 12, and 13, belong to the Eared #3 type, although some variation is noticeable. This kind of point has been uncovered repeatedly at various sites at a level representing the last half of the Late Archaic, estimated to have extended between 3,500 down to 2,000 years ago. However, it is worth noting here, that other point types found in pits #6,7, and 8, which lay at a distance from the crematory, included Adena, Small Stem, and large Cache blades. These types, except the Small Stem, which has an earlier source, have been found to belong to a later period, after the close of the Late Archaic.

Further interpretation of the Seaver Farm cremation complex seems to suggest the following events that may have taken place. First there was the burning of the dead in the crematory, at which time functional tools were thrown into the fire. This act may have been intended as a means of having these implements accompany the departed into the next world, with fire as the sacred agent to unite them. However, there was much more to the burial rites than what took place at the crematory. After the fire had cooled, a nearby pit was dug, while fragments of burned bone of the dead were sometimes scooped up with a little charcoal often being included for redeposit in the burial pit. Also a quantity of charcoal was often transferred from the crematory to the secondary burial, as found in Pit#10. Probably this was done as a symbolic act of introducing the combined burnt remains and charcoal in an effort to assure a good afterlife for the departed. Finally, new artifacts were sometimes carefully placed in the secondary deposits along with burnt ones, as found in Pit #10, and to a lesser extent in Pit #12.

So far as the use of red ocher is concerned — a substance obtained by grinding blocks of hematite like the small ground piece from the crematory — its elaborate use suggests that it played a significant part in rituals performed by the shamanic spiritual leaders. Beyond this general conception of the ceremonies, all else that may be said is speculative. However, it seems reasonable to suggest that red ocher — a bloodlike substance — may have been used as a symbolic blood offering for the purpose of bringing the dead one to life again in the other world. For there it was believed that in a materialistic world, the dead would need blood along with tools for survival. The small caches of burnt human bone fragments seem to have been still another way of bringing the dead spirit from the crematory to effect a more potent bond between the cremated and the shaman performing the ceremonies. In this way the mourners were assured of a good life for the departed in the next world of mystery, the key to which was believed to rest in the hands of their shaman priest. Also, sometimes artifacts were deliberately broken, or "killed", as was the case with the 15" pestle in Pit #10. This act may have been done with the idea of changing the object into a similar useless shape to that of the dead body, that they might better journey into the other world together.

A question concerning the small deposits within the larger burial pits seems to demand an answer. As has been been reported, within Pit #12 with pink ocher and in Pit #10 with red ocher, several secondary deposits containing ocher and grave goods were encountered. The question is, does each of these deposits represent a separate secondary burial, or were they a part of a single ceremony conducted at each of the two pits?

After giving some thought to this question, it appears likely that a single deposit with grave goods represents a separate burial. The reasoning here is that in as much as the bottom levels of the deposits in each pit were not always the same, the deposits might be considered to have been made on different occasions, thus requiring the pits to remain open for a protracted period of time. And, as the Eared #3 point type remained constant throughout the pits near the crematory, this might indicate a more or less contemporaneous association of some kind. As for pits #6,7, and 8 of the previous report, their age seems to have been somewhat later after the Eared #3 point had ceased being used.

So here are various hypothetical suggestions of what may have taken place at this cremation burial complex. Other solutions are possible of course, and are expected from those who think they have better answers. However, those suggested in this conclusion seem to be possible ones, which it is hoped will lead to further thought on the subject. It is expected that additional excavations will at least support our observations so far, that there existed no set ritualistic formular requiring the exclusive use of certain kinds of grave goods by shaman leaders. On the contrary, grave goods varied from site to site, while the use of red ocher remained quite constant, with only a few exceptions.

Finally, it should be noted that there is a difference between the grave goods as used in New England cremations, and those from burials in other parts of the world. Here in this area inclusion of articles of adornment is rare, almost never found among grave goods from cremations. A Whaletail pendant found in one Titicut cremation, and possibly a few bone beads at Wapanucket 8 complex are all that come to mind. Otherwise, the nearest thing to it seems to be the so-called lucky stone, such as the pink quartz pebble at Seaver Farm in Pit #6, or the thick iridescent white quartz stone, completely chipped into a flattened rounded shape, from a cremation grave in Brookfield, excavated some years ago.

Cremation burial evidence so far uncovered here in New England indicates a concern over survival, to the exclusion of dependence upon ornamental offerings. Grave goods consist, with but few exceptions, of tools for use in the procurement of food as fit gifts to accompany the dead. This doubtless is as might be expected in the Late Archaic period, which has been shown to be the age associated with the practice of cremating the dead. For it represents an evolving culture that has not reached a more affluent civilized state, in which survival was not such a pressing problem. By the time the whites had arrived, agriculture was an important factor in supplying food, when needed, to the Indian descendants of their Archaic ancestors. Consequently, it was then that grave goods in flexed burials frequently included articles of adornment, such as glass and bone beads, pendants, and other pieces of native finery.

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## DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S VISIT TO MIDDLEBORO IN 1773

*By* GRANVILLE T. SPROAT *in an issue of the Middleboro Gazette in the year* 1883

It was during the summer of 1773, one hundred and ten years ago, that Dr. Franklin made his memorable visit to Middleboro. He was the guest of Dr. Peter Oliver, and stopped at the Oliver mansion, now standing, the residence of Miss Mary Sproat, the artist. In the evening he gave a reception to some of the most prominent men in Middleboro. Among them were Rev. Mr. Conant of the old Central Meeting House on the Green, Dr. Samuel Clarke, and Elkanah Leonard, the lawyer who afterward went crazy, thought the world was turned upside down and wore his shoes strapped bottom upwards on the soles of his feet. Many people, since his day, with their shoes right side up and their wits about them, have come to the same conclusion.

Franklin wore, on that occasion, his famous old continental suit of homespun gray, his short breeches of drab, and his long, plain worsted stockings. It was the same suit he wore to the court of France, amid powdered courtiers in their scarlet velvet coats trimmed with gold lace, and their stockings of the finest Parisian silk. But he so charmed them by the quiet grace and dignity of his manners, and his words of deep, practical wisdom, that they forgot all about his plain unlaced coat, and his worsted stockings. The ladies of the Court flocked around him, called him "Papa Franklin," and placed a crown of laurel decked with pearls, on his head.

Dr. Franklin did most of the talking. The others sat and listened. This was no disagreeable task, for he was considered one of the best conversationalists of his age — a man of most uncommon common sense. He first conversed on the subject of electricity. He had lately made many experiments, some of them very wonderful to his hearers; he had drawn lightning from the heavens by means of a kite covered with silk, and an iron point at its head. By a hempen cord fastened to it, the lightning is conducted to a key placed between it and a nonconducting silk cord, held in his hand. He had touched the key, and been knocked down twice. But no matter, he had discovered that lightning and electricity are the same, and henceforth he can move the world, if he will. He had lately put up lightning rods on the old Governor Hancock House in Boston, to protect it from the destructive element, the first ever invented, and remaining to the day of most of us now living. He had invented his "Franklin stove" to save fuel, to be used instead of the great, old fashioned fireplaces, with their large, open mouths, and their wide throats, around which our ancestors used to freeze and thaw by turns. He had invented sidewalks, and crossings for the streets in Boston and Philadelphia; and had set an old woman to sweep them, thus showing how much easier it is to keep streets clean by sweeping them when they are dry, than hoeing and scraping them when they are wet, and thereby making his kinsfolks ashamed of their dirty ways. He had invented lighter wheels for carriages to take the place of the old lumbering ones that encumbered the streets of Boston. He had invented an improved watering-trough for horses, from which several could drink together, instead of the rude old watering tub of former years. He had improved the printing press, and invented stereotyping. He had made spectacles with two sets of glasses, one for far, the other for near sight. He had cured smoky chimneys of their bad habits, so that half of the housewives in the land had risen up and called him blessed. He had introduced new kinds of seeds, grass, turnips, broom-corn, curious beans and vines from England and France. He had introduced the corn-broom into hundreds of families in New England, to be used instead of the stiff, hard, old birch-broom of our ancestors. He had invented a chair with a fan moved by a treadle, to drive away flies from the sick and weary who needed repose. He had instituted some of the best methods to mitigate the ferocities of war, and the best way to construct hospitals for the sick. He had formed fire companies in Boston, debating societies, book clubs, libraries, hospitals, and other institutions of benevolence. In short, he had proved himself one of the greatest benefactors of the race, the universal Good Samaritan. Benevolence shone in every lineament of his face; it spoke from out his large, soul speaking eyes, as he stood in that parlour below the hills, once the home of Jesse Muttock, the friendly old Indian Chief, more than a hundred years ago. His hearers sat as men enraptured; the two hours they were with him flew as moments; they never forgot that evening's interview; it dwelt in their memory to the last moment of their lives.

Franklin stayed three days in Middleboro. On Sunday he attended meeting at the Old Meeting House on the Green, and during intermission, he gathered a crowd of worthy farmers around him, and conversed with them concerning their crops, and the best way of enriching their lands, so as to gather the largest crops from them. He also gave them a few lessons on morals, warned them of getting in debt, for said he, "Lying rides on debts' back," and "It is hard to make an empty bag stand up straight." He left them Poor Richard's Almanac, full of wise sayings and useful hints for success in life. It became their patron saint; the Bible of the field and barn. From it they learned how to lead happy and useful lives. It taught them industry and frugality by such maxims as these: Pay as you go, and put the rest of the money in your pocket. When Idleness walks in the door, Poverty jumps in at the window. If you would have a faithful servant, serve yourself. Pride is a greater beggar than Want, and a great deal more saucy. To warm your house, don't set your chimney on fire. Put in at the big end of the bag, and take out at the small. Lying has crooked ways; the straight road is the shortest way to market. Empty your purse into your brains, and nobody can steal it. The horse is fettered by his master's eye. For want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; for want of a horse the man lost his way and was himself lost.

The old inhabitants hung up the Almanac in their kitchens and workshops, and they were never tired of repeating the sayings of the wisest man of his age. They stored them in their memories. They gave a new shape to their lives. They never forgot him, nor their children after them. Their faces brighten, after a hundred years, when they hear the name of Franklin.

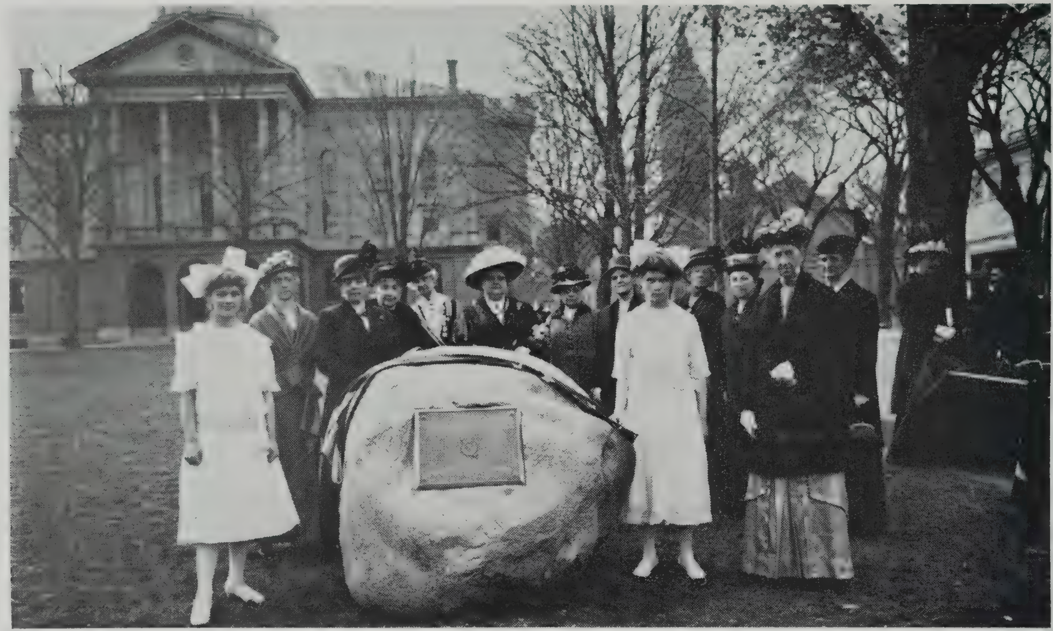
Franklin left Middleboro never to return. It was the first and last visit of the great philosopher to the old provincial town of Middleboro.

*Notes.* 1. Franklin did not always indulge in the same simplicity of dress. He changed customs as the country became prosperous, and he had increased in wealth. Some items of expense from his diary look a little curious, to us, when we consider the rigid economy and plodding industry of his early years. But then he was ploughing — now he is reaping. Here are some of them: "A fan for Debby, his wife, two shillings;" "A beaver hat for himself, two pounds." "Sixteen yards of floweret tissue, nine guineas;" (fifty dollars) for his wife;" "A pair of buckles for his daughter, three guineas;" "A pair of silk blankets, very fine, (taken to a privateer) and a fine jug of beer." Said he, "I fell in love with the jug at first sight, for I thought it looked like a fat, jolly dame, clean and tidy, dressed in a neat blue and white calico gown, good natured and lovely, and it puts me in mind of — somebody."

2. Franklin, when a child, was noticed for his strict economy in little things. He remembered that "time is money." A curious story is told of him, illustrating this. It was the custom in those days for the puritans to make long prayers before eating, the family standing around the table. Franklin became very impatient with what he considered a great waste of time. He hit on a plan to prevent it. One day, while assisting his father in salting beef in the cellar, he said with childish frankness, "Father, why would it not be a good plan to say grace, once for all, over the whole barrel of beef? It would save *heaps* of time." A stern look from his Puritan father was all the answer the boy got for his rather irreverent question.

3. For twenty-five years Franklin published, annually, ten thousand copies of Poor Richard's Almanac. "I have often thought," said one of our great thinkers, "that the battle of the Revolution could not have been fought, between 1775 and 1783, had not the Almanac been published from 1730 to 1755. By teaching thrift it enabled Congress to keep the Revolutionary army together for nearly seven years."

4. George the Third, during the early days of the Revolution, said to his ministers: "Beware of the crafty rebel, Benjamin Franklin. He has more brains than all of you together; and will outwit you all." The crazy old king spoke the truth.



## NEMASKET CHAPTER, D.A.R.
## 1907-1936

The above boulder is located at the corner of South Main Street and Nickerson Avenue. Nemasket Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, participated in many patriotic events of the town, and in 1914 raised funds to defray the expense of a memorial tablet inscribed to the memory of the more than five hundred soldiers who went from Middleboro to fight in the War of the Rebellion. The monument was unveiled on May 5, 1915. Standing beside the boulder are the Misses Thalic Stetson on the left and Catherine Bates on the right. Mrs. C. D. Kingman, far right, made the presentation. Among others in the background may be recognized Mrs. Ruth Cushman Holmes, center; Mrs. Edward H. Cleveland, Mrs. Charlotte Ellis, Mrs. Charles H. Bates.

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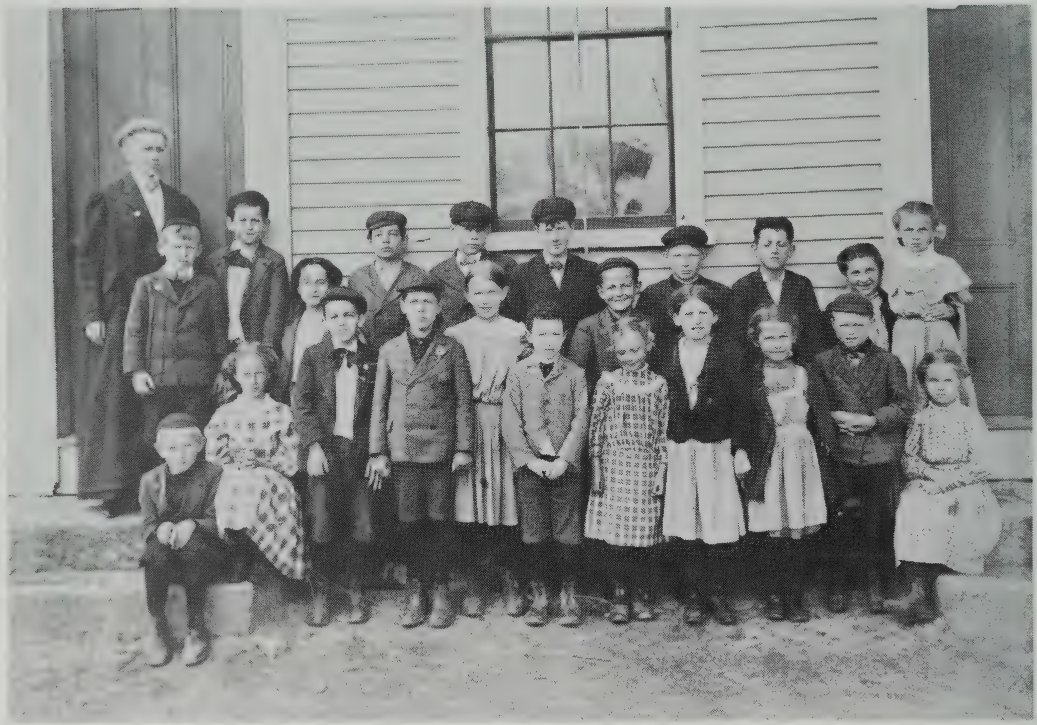

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Miss Bessie B. Bailey, Teacher

Back row, l to r: Howard Sparrow, Murray Day, Anna Thompson, Clifton McCrillis, Edward Griffith, Horace Griffith, Ralph Theall, Herbert Erickson, Michael Collins, Edith Burt, Lillian Chapman. Front row: Charles Erickson, Ruth Bryant, Hyman Gold, William Theall, Annie Erickson, George Hudson, Dorothy Burt, Rosalie Sears, Hattie Sears, Guy O'Brien, Dorothy Fessenden.

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VOLUME XIV AUGUST 1973 NUMBER 4

## OLIVER MILL PARK

The site of Judge Peter Oliver's Iron Works has been the scene of much activity the past seven years, as, under the supervision of Archaeologist Roland Wells Robbins and with money appropriated by the townspeople, the Park has been undergoing a long anticipated restoration.

During and before the American Revolution, Judge Oliver's mills produced cannon balls, iron nails, and anchors, as well as cider in the cider mill, grain in the gristmill and lumber in the sawmill. Nemasket was then the center of the town. Stores, houses, and all activities were clustered around the dam and the Nemasket River. Judge Oliver, because of his Tory sympathies, was driven out of town and fled to England, never to return. His thriving industrial complex gradually fell into ruins, and it is only within the past few years that a definite effort has been made to restore the town's most historic spot. An account of the progress made is to be found on the following pages.

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## THE OLIVER MILL PARK RESTORATION

*A report*

by Roland Wells Robbins

This is the story of a suburban New England town and its concern for its historical heritage. It is not a new theme; rather, it is an old story. But this story has a different setting. It is relatively easy to get individuals to talk about the history and the past of their community. But to get them to do something about it that goes beyond talking, that is another matter.

This is the story about Middleborough, Massachusetts — a community that not only talked about its three centuries of rich American heritage, but did something about it. Its well laid plans to commemorate the town's 300th anniversary with nine days of exhilarating celebrating in August, 1969, went so smoothly little was left for wanting. It provided joyous entertainment for the citizenry with its parades, costumes, dances, parties, exhibits and open houses. All of this would end at midnight August 10th, not unlike Cinderella's fate at the ball with the stroke of midnight. Then the buntings would be taken down, the exhibits dismantled and the costumes and the frills stored away until the town's 325th or 350th anniversary. The spirit of celebrating the past would dwindle with the reality of the present, and the townspeople would settle back to the normal level of their everyday way of life, each cherishing personal memories of the tercentenary occasion.

Of the many preparations made for Middleborough's tercentenary commemoration, possibly the most unheralded event will provide the most lasting physical accomplishment for the occasion. This was the completion of the first phase of the colonial Oliver Mill Restoration. The Oliver Mill Park dedication took place at 5 P.M. on Sunday, August 3rd, 1969. Mr. Anders Martenson, Middleboro's Town Manager, and members of Middleborough's Board of Selectmen were present with their wives and families. Also present was Mrs. Peter Oliver, a descendant of Judge Peter Oliver, for whom this colonial industrial park was being dedicated.

Scene at the dedication of Oliver Mill Park, August 3, 1969.

I was privileged to be the guest speaker of the Oliver Mill Park dedication. Following is my dedicatory address:

"It is said, "We cannot plan successfully for the future without having a rich knowledge of our past."

For nine busy, mid-twentieth century days you are again living in the past as you pay tribute to Middleborough's heritage during the past three hundred years. These three centuries experienced periods of success, and there were times of failure, to be sure. But the community kept abreast of the growth of the country.

The industrial progress of your colonial times was expansive and unique to say the least. Middleborough's greatest period of colonial industrial success was achieved by Judge Peter Oliver over a period of more than thirty years just prior to the Revolution.

Judge Oliver's inventory of his colonial industries, situated on the earthen dam that crosses the Nemasket River before us, was most impressive. The list:

A grist mill
A saw mill
A boulting mill
A cider mill
A large forge 70 feet long and 50 feet wide, almost new with three fires and in compleat repair.
A slitting mill which they had an exclusive right to in New England by Act of Parliament.

The above works stood upon the same dam and on a large river affording a constant supply of water throughout the year.

The appendages to such works were:

A large anchor shop for making of anchor.
A machine for weighing carts and their ladings.
A blacksmith's shop.
A large coal barn 90 feet long and 40 feet wide.
Capacious for one hundred thousands bushels of charcoal. (Site of the charcoal house is probably located below Spring Street)
Three dwelling houses.
Five acres of land.

In speaking of his unusually large supply of water used for turning the many waterwheels that powered his numerous industries here on the Nemasket River, Judge Oliver said, "I have often had eight wheels going at the same time, on one dam, and waste water for eight wheels more — this river was of that importance as to be noted in the map of that province."

During the past three years the citizens of Middleborough have appropriated their money at their Town Meetings to bring about the completion of the first phase of the Oliver Mill Park Restoration, which we are dedicating today.

The deep muds, soils, rubble and the heavy coverage of trees and vegetation that had buried this famous colonial industrial site have been removed and the exposed ruins have been repaired and preserved — thanks to the townspeople of Middleborough.

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.

VOLUME XIV 1973 Number 4
Mertie E. Romaine .......... Editor

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Not only is this dedication a tribute to Middleborough's colonial industrial past, it is also a tribute to the citizens of Middleborough for their vision and the desire to reestablish the physical features of the colonial times, so that they would serve as a constant reminder of their heritage.

With no *state, government, industry, nor private financial assistance,* the people of Middleborough have made possible the completion of the intricate historical, archaeological and architectural project that we dedicate today as Oliver Mill Park.

But this is only the beginning. Much more remains to be done!

The ruins at the site of the 19th century sawmill should be preserved, and the fish ladder we built should be extended out to the end of the sawmill's waterwheel pit.

The ruins of Peter Oliver's slitting mill, situated just beyond the refinery-forge site should be excavated and its waterwheel pits and raceways restored.

And the section of the old dam we restored should be continued all the way across the Nemasket River, and the old road that once crossed the dam should be reestablished as a colonial landmark.

Foundations for a building and stonework for a raceway as it looked when first excavated.

The ruins that survive on the northerly side of the river should be excavated, repaired and preserved.

To fulfill these projects would provide Middleborough with a unique, unmatched Colonial Industries Restoration.

Instead of looking out at four restored waterways through which water now flows, one would witness eight or more restored waterways with water flowing through them, stretching from one embankment of the Nemasket River across to the other.

The ultimate goal should be the reestablishment of the Colonial Industrial Scene that once dominated this site, with the reconstruction of the gristmill, sawmill, refinery-forge, slitting mill, boulting mill, cider mill, the large anchor shop and the workshops that thrived from the ever-flowing waters of the Nemasket River.

To fulfill such an ambitious program of restoration would reveal one of America's most unusual and attractive restorations.

By sponsoring Phase One of the Oliver Mill Park Restoration the citizens of Middleborough have exposed the unlimited potential of this colonial site.

Now is the time for outside assistance to come to the aid of the Oliver Mill Park Restoration. This can be in the form of local businesses, private sources, industrial, state and governmental subsidies. I imagine that all contributions to the Oliver Mill Park Restoration — both large and small — would be gratefully received by the town.

I am personally indebted to the late Lawrence Romaine, my friend of many years standing, for first bringing to my attention the history of this site and its unusual potential for restoration purposes. Larry devoted many years to furthering the cause of Middleborough and its history. The work that has been accomplished at the Oliver Mill Park Restoration would meet with Larry's enthusiastic approval, I'm sure.

Many Middleborough citizens and committees have worked diligently during the past three years to make possible this dedication.

I am indebted to Bill Byrne for his efficient service in excavating and landscaping the site, transforming it from a hodgepodge of 19th and 20th century rubble and jungle back to its natural colonial terrain. Napoleon DesRosiers, Jr. built the new wooden waterwheel pits and raceways, and Robert Candee was the project engineer. These men are residents of Middleborough.

My special thanks go to Al Robbins, Superintendent of Middleborough's Highways, for the numerous contributions of assistance he and his men have made for this project.

Last — but not least — I am indebted to Mr. Anders Martenson, your Town Manager, and to the Board of Selectmen. Their assistance and cooperation left nothing to be desired. For this I am most grateful.

It now gives me great pleasure to present to Mr. Paul Anderson, Chairman of the Middleborough Board of Selectmen, the keys that control the flood gates of the Oliver Mill Park Restoration.

May the waters of the Nemasket River forever flow down the streams of time."

Oliver Mill Park as it looks today on a quiet Sunday morning.

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Under Mr. Robbins' expert supervision, much of the work suggested in his report has been accomplished. There is, as he says, much yet to be done, but the transformation from a rubble filled waterhole and a jungle of trees, has been astounding. The raceways cleared and the beautifully constructed stonework presents a picture of great beauty. One of the most visible improvements is the construction of two sturdy bridges spanning the river. Best of all, Oliver Mill Park is appreciated by the people and is in constant use. Picnic tables and seats have been arranged in one section of the Park and are in use daily for picnics and cookouts. In June, the Park was the scene of a wedding!

Thanks to Mr. Robbins' expertise, the cooperation of the Board of Selectmen, the efforts of the Oliver Mill Park Committee which heads the Oliver Mill Park Association, and the willingness of the citizens to appropriate money at Town Meetings to further the work, Oliver Mill Park Restoration is well on the way to becoming a fitting replica of Judge Peter Oliver's pre-Revolutionary industrial complex.

## SOME IMPRESSIONS

by Clint Clark

My first impression was that we had moved to a city, because there were trolley cars and we had none on the Cape. I was thrilled to think of the fun it would be, living within a few hundred feet of the railroad station. Hyannis was at the end of a branch from Yarmouth and it was quite a long walk just to get to the station to see the departure of the daily train. Now we had a home just over the hill from a busy terminal, bustling with passenger and freight trains that came and went all day and most of the night.

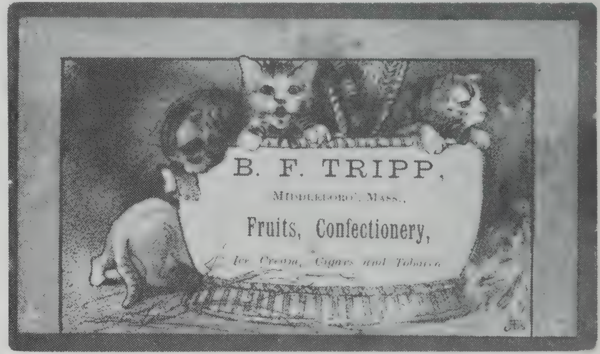
Some comparisons were favorable to the new home town, some were not. The "new" school, Union Street, was a disappointment. Built in 1857, it was then showing its age and was unlike the big red brick school I had left in Hyannis. The Cape school stood close to the "Normal School" as state teachers' colleges were then called, and I was accustomed to big, ivy covered buildings, the dormitories, and the spacious tree-shaded campus. The new home town fared better when I compared libraries. Again, I thought we must be in a city when I saw the imposing library building on North Main Street. The Hyannis library was in a cozy little Cape Cod cottage.

The shoe industry was very much alive when we came here. I saw hundreds of people going in and out of the big factories. We had none in Hyannis, where the main industry was catering to summer people and that was only two months of the year. After the Labor Day exodus, with the fashionable West End shops boarded up, Hyannis settled down to being a village. About the only excitement, if it could be called that, was going down to the Post Office after the train came in with the mail.

The way people lived here, even the way they talked, was different. People seemed to be more industrious, more burdened by routine than on Cape Cod, where the atmosphere was relaxed. Most Cape Codders worked hard in the summer, making all they could from the tourists, and sort of coasted through the winter. The ocean provided a lot of free food and we used to say that no one need starve on the Cape so long as he could take a bucket and digger and get down to the clam flats, or get a boat and go fishing.

When we arrived on the train, our new neighbors presented themselves, each contributing something for our first meals while we got settled. It was a nice, friendly welcome, and a pleasant surprise. Once settled, however, we found Middleboro folk somewhat reserved. But perhaps that was the impression of newcomers from a place where kinfolk were numerous and neighbors were "dropping in to pass the time of day."

Things went well in school, once the novelty of a "new boy" waned. Eventually, I realized that this was not a city, and the longer I lived here the smaller and friendlier it became. Now, after about fifty years, I feel like a native . . . almost!



The beauty of the pastel coloring of the B. F. Tripp trade card is lost in the black and white reproduction, but it is typical of the advertising cards put out by firms in the late 1800's and early 1900's. The Middleboro Historical Museum is indebted to the late Wilfred Keyes for most of the interesting collection on display at the Museum.

The B. F. Tripp Company was established in 1863 by Benjamin F. Tripp. The firm became widely known for the excellence of ice cream and confectionery of its own manufacture. The business was first established in a store on the corner of South Main and Centre Street, but when the building burned, a move was made to a location on Wareham Street, (then Water Street). After a few years, another move brought the firm to a location on Centre Street not far from the corner of North Main and Centre Streets, and in 1892 a permanent move was made to the opposite side of the street where the firm carried on business until closed in 1966.

Such was the firm's fame for the manufacture of molasses kisses, peanut brittle and "Nemasket Chocolates", that travelers to the Cape made it a point to come through Middleboro and lay in a supply of these goodies to take on vacation.

In 1904, Timothy and Arthur Tripp, son and grandson of the founder, became proprietors of the business. In 1909, the firm became "Tripp's Candy Kitchen," with Arthur Tripp and John J. Walsh, partners. In 1940, James F. McQuade, long employed in the store, purchased the business and after his death in 1961, it was carried on by his widow, Luella, and their son, James B. McQuade, until closed in 1966. Now there is not a vestage of the old store to be seen, it having recently been demolished and the space used by the Middleborough Trust Company.

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The actual date of the first settlement of Middleboro remains a bit uncertain. No authentic record establishes a date so the date of 1654 has been accepted as the date of the first white settlement. According to Weston's "History of Middleboro" the date was arrived at because of the statement in the earliest records of the First Church or, as it is often called, the Church on the Green.

A Biblical quotation starts off the Church records in 1694 . . ."Thous shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years."

It has been said that our forefathers were religious people and that such a quotation would not have been used as an opening statement of the document drawn up when the First Church was formed. In other words, lacking and documents to prove it otherwise . . . this statement was taken literally . . . and forty years was deducted from 1694 to arrive at the date of 1654 as the time when the first permanent white settlers arrived.

The Church played a very important part in the lives of the early settlers. Yet no Church was erected until 1694. It has been traditionally accepted that the homes of the early settlers were so far removed from each other that the establishment of a Church was not attempted. Further it has been presumed that many of the settlers attended Church in the towns where they had originally lived and that for many of them was Plymouth.

In 1675 the General Court at Plymouth, by an ordinance, decreed that each and every township within the colony should have a house of worship and a church duly organized, with proper provision for the support of an ordained minister. On 26 December 1694 Middleboro took the proper and necessary steps to start a church within the boundaries of the town.

This period from 1654 to 1694 is more or less a 'blank space' in the history of the town. Middleborough was incorporated as a town in 1669 . . . and if the date of 1654 is accurate . . . then we have a period of some 15 years in which the first settlers arrived.

There seems to be no complete list of these first settlers. However in 1658 there is a document under date of the 4th of March in which 14 men attest to having found the body of an English man which the Indians had taken out of the 'River of Tetacutt" at a place a "little below Namaskett." The names of men were as follows: Samuell Edson, William Snow, John Vobes (Fobes), Guydo Bayley, Marke Laythorpe, Thomas Haward, Junr., John Willis, Solomon Lenerson, John Haward, Senir, John Carew from Bridgewater, Nathaneell Willis, Lawarence Willis, Arthur Harris, Nathaneel Haward.

It is interesting to note that John Carew is the only person identified as from a specific town . . . in this case Bridgewater. Yet all of these names appear early in the Bridgewater records . . . except Carew. Perhaps the intent was to indicate that all persons named were of Bridgewater and not just John Carew. Bridgewater was originally part of the Duxbury Grant and became incorporated as the town of Bridgewater in 1656. There was a Leonard family in Bridgewater early and since there was a Solomon Leonard in the family it is very likely that Lenerson is a mis-reading of Leonard.

As time goes on we find that most of the above family names appear in the early Middleborough records. The exception is John Carew . . . who, in fact, was more often called John Cary or Carey who was first in Duxbury and later of Bridgewater and Plymouth.

Because of the frequency of the Indian wars settlers and settlements 'came and went' and there were few permanent roots put down in the Middleborough area until the 28th of June in 1677 when the township of "Middleberry" was taken off from Plymouth. Some 68 persons met and agreed to resettle the town. The list includes many old families and many of them were persons who actually were re-settling after having found that momentarily, at least, the Indian disturbances had subsided.

The following names appear on this list of 1677 proprietors. It is stated in this document that "the inhabitants of Middleberry not only lost their habitations with most of their estates . . . but also lost their records."

Many of the original purchasers of land rights never settled on the land purchased. Sometimes it was passed along to a son, a married daughter and at other times it was sold to someone who wished to purchase land. Many of the names are still to be seen in the phone book or a street list for Middleborough and/or some of the surrounding towns. Josiah Winslow transferred his right to Mr. John Brooke, Major Bradford's went to Gydo Baley, Capt. Perregrine White (owned considerable land but never lived here himself), and also Bassett, Warren, Alden, Bartlett, Hallowell, Richard, Jordan, Mitchell, Paine, Harlow, Dunham, Eddy, Bumpas, Vaughan, Soule, Haskell, Nelson, Fuller, Tinkham, Rogers, and so one . . . these are surnames of only a few on the list of re-settling proprietors.

The first United States Census was taken in 1790 and it is interesting to note that some 113 years later many of these same surnames appear as residents of the Middleboro area . . . such as . . . Vaughn, Tinkham, Eddy, Soule, Fuller, Alden, Haskell and so on. It is a very safe bet that in almost every instance a relationship of these 1790 residents could be traced back the 113 years to those who were listed as the re-settlers after the Indian Wars.

Without a doubt there are many Association members who have family records establishing a kinship to these early settlers and their descendants who appear in the 1790 census. Roughly speaking, a man listed in the 1790 census is a 5 to 6 generation span away from the person on the 1677 list. Therefore, it is not possible to say that this is proof of a relationship but it certainly is a strong indication that the record in the family Bible would help to establish a lineage to a first settler.

## ANNUAL MEETING
## Middleborough Historical Association
### June 4, 1973

The members of the Middleborough Historical Association gathered for the fifty-first annual meeting of the society at the lovely old historical church at the Green, the First Congregational Church of Middleboro. After enjoying a turkey dinner served by the Women of the Green, the meeting adjourned to the church auditorium when the business meeting was held with election of officers for the coming year.

Entertainment for the evening was more or less an experiment, but proved to be an unqualified success — a "Show and Tell" program with members bringing family treasures and relating something of their history. A surprising variety of articles was presented, beginning with G. Ward Stetson who showed and told about two documents, one signed by Peter Oliver and one by John Hancock, followed by:

A. Kingman Pratt — an heirloom plate with genealogy dating from 1734.

Mrs. Ernest S. Pratt — a "Friendship Quilt," given to Mrs. Pratt's grandmother in 1855, autographed by members and friends of the family.

Miss Louise B. Pratt — a child's rocker, 250 years old, and in it a Bradford cushion 100 years old.

Mrs. John J. Martin — old musical instruments: a pitchpipe belonging to the Historical Museum, wooden, handmade, thought to have been used in church services in the 1700's; also a flute dating back to the 1700's, made of wood and decorated with ivory.

Mrs. William F. Boucher — an early portrait in a triple frame.

Gustavus Winroth — a gold headed cane that belonged to Henry Wilson who served under President Grant.

Mrs. Lawrence B. Romaine — an "optic", a picture frame containing glass that magnifies the picture, all on a standard, measuring overall twenty-three inches. A similar one is to be seen in the bedroom of Thomas Jefferson at Monticello.

Mrs. Henry B. Burkland — Civil War letters written by her grandfather, Dura T. Weston.

Ruth E. Gates — Civil War momentos that belonged to her grandfather, Andrew Freeman.

Rodney Briggs — whale bone that was used to make whale bone stays for ladies garments.

Mrs. Franklin G. Harlow — a collection of glass including a rare and beautiful piece of Sandwich glass.

Franklin G. Harlow — A general order of the militia of Middleboro after the Civil War.

Mrs. Elmer G. Allen — deed to her home from John Thomas, an Indian, dated 1754.

Wyman Briggs — a glass jug used by his great grandfather to carry wine.

Mrs. Russell Osborne — a book of momentos of Miss Eleanor Barden, a teacher for many years in Middleboro. Mrs. Osborne presented the book to the Middleborough Historical Museum.

George Breck — a mortar and pestle made in 1878 from a tree planted by Lydia Eddy.

Mrs. Reginald W. Drake — Buttons from a garment worn at the inaugural of Abraham Lincoln.

Mrs. Lyman Butler — a miniature china doll at least one hundred years old.

Mrs. A. Kingman Pratt — two machine woven silk pictures made in 1860.

Albert Soule — An army document of 1796.

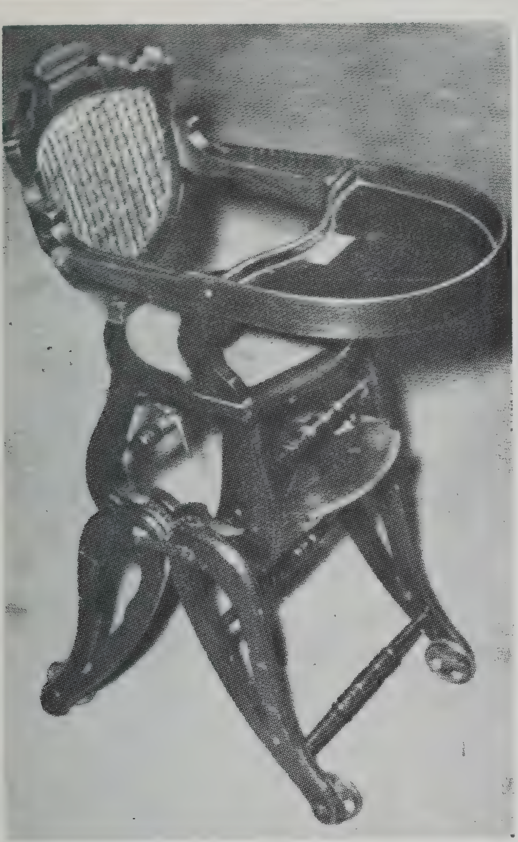
Mrs. Clifton McCrillis — a picture of the fresco work back of the pulpit in the First Congregational Church — a beautiful work of art hidden by the reredos that hangs behind the pulpit.

Mrs. Lawrence B. Romaine served as Master of Ceremonies for the program.

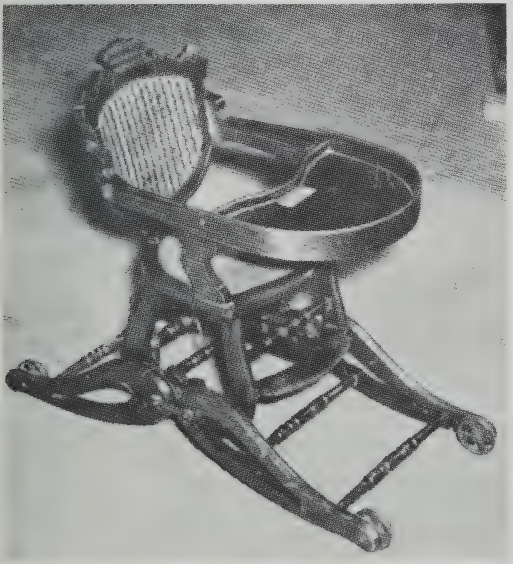
## A HIGHCHAIR WITH A HISTORY
### The Adam Finger Highchair

In July, 1953, a magazine "The Chronicle" published an illustrated article about the Adam Finger highchair. The chair pictured was on display in the Milwaukee County Historical Society Museum, and the article stated that this particular chair was believed to be the only one of its kind in existence. This statement has proved to be erroneous since Life Magazine of March 5, 1956, pictured just such a chair then owned by the Staten Island Historical Society. That there is at least one other such chair in existence is borne out by the fact that one has been in use in the Editor's family for more than one hundred years.

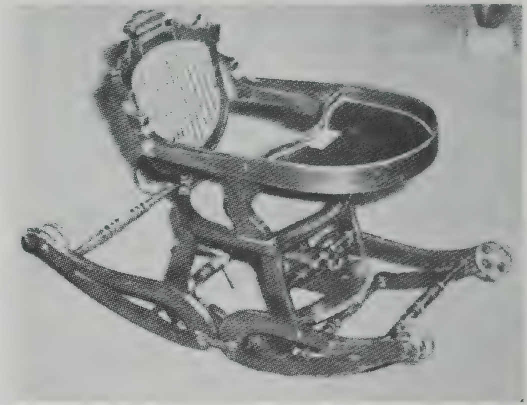
In 1856, a cabinetmaker by the name of Adam Finger built a highchair in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The chair stood approximately four feet high, was made by hand by Mr. Finger, and through a simple and yet ingenious device, could be collapsed into two different positions. By pulling a knob on the back of the chair, it could be lowered half way down and made into a chair in which the child could sit or be pushed about, like in a stroller. One more tug on the knob reduced the chair to a rocker.



The chair in its original position. The legs extend beyond the wheels an eighth of an inch to prevent its rolling away.



In the low, or stroller, position. The chair is low enough for the child's feet to touch the floor and propel the chair.



The rocker position, in which the chair rests on the curve of the legs. The child can reach the floor with his feet and thus propel the chair. By rocking vigorously, the chair can be made to "walk" and cover considerable ground!

The chair first entered the present family's ownership in 1870 when it was purchased by his parents in Lynn, Massachusetts for George A. Philbrook, born on April 3rd of that year. It was next brought into use when his daughter, Mertie Elizabeth, was born. She can well remember rocking the chair from room to room, all over the house. Relegated to the attic in the meantime, it was again brought forth when Allan A. Witbeck, the third generation, was born on April 22, 1914.

When Allan's daughter, Diane, was born in Michigan in 1946, the chair remained in Middleboro, but at the present time, it is in daily use in Warren, Michigan, by the fifth generation, Alan Todd Hartman. Before being shipped to its new home, the chair was recaned and refinished, and does not give a hint that it is more than a century ago that it brought joy to the first owner in 1870 and to each succeding progeny even unto the fifth generation.

## OLD MIDDLEBORO MERCHANTS

by Lyman Butler

While looking through the old Gen. E. W. Pierce history and directory of Middleboro, 1899 which Mrs. Donald Garnier kindly loaned me, some of the advertisements are really interesting, like the one of a Gideon S. Thomas: Fruit and Confectionery Bazaar. Ice Cream and Oyster Stews served at all hours. Well I like ice cream and I like oyster stew also but the combination is not just what I would pick. He also carried a full stock of cigars and tobacco. Ice Cream at short notice. This store was located on Main Street next to the Nemasket House which at this time was managed by H. E. Penniman. Transients would be boarded at a dollar a day, cheaper if by the week.

The people of today could never have lived back at that era as there were no easy credit terms like we have today. Most stores had to have "Cash on the barrel head" as they say.

At that time there were two newspapers published in Middleboro. The Gazette with J. M. Coombs, Prop. and The Middleboro Semi-weekly News, which was issued on Tuesday and Friday. M. M. Copeland was publisher of this sheet with office on Academy Green which I assume was where Thatchers Print Shop is now. This bi-weekly was $1.50 per year. In 1889 there was no North or South Main Street. From the corner of North and East Main Street to the Lakeville line was just Main Street.

Then there was C. C. Crooker, Agent for Bridal Veil Flour and Standard Java Coffee. This store was at the corner of Main and Water Street so I presume it was where in my day Peckham's Market stood. Another interesting ad is the one of Thomas G. Ford, Horse Shoer and Carriage Smith. It says "We use Dr. Roberg's Patent Hoof Expander for the cure and prevention of contraction, Quarter Cracks, Corns etc." Boy those are all new to me, can't remember of any of our horses having corns, but have heard of a bog spavin and the heaves.

Another one is F. W. Hayden Optical Goods, Jewelry, Watches, also Guns, Fishing supplies etc. Lots of these stores carried a varied assortment of goods since in those days, with a smaller poulation, they could not specialize on just one thing. Today, an optometrist just sells glasses and a jeweler just sells jewelry, watches etc.

Another interesting ad is the one of "Matthews and Ransey's Hair Dressing and Bath Rooms. Special attention given to cutting and shampooing Ladies Hair." So you see even back in 1889 they had a beauty shop right on Center Street or as the advertisement says you could get a bath before going on that date, even if you did not have a bathroom in your house. I take it that this is the same location and the same Pete Ramsey which I knew as a youngster next to the Pierce Building on Center Street.

There are very few of the advertisers that are still doing business today under the same name as at that time. LeBaron Ice Company is one that is still going only selling oil instead of ice. Another is J. L. Jenney Coal Co.

Looking back to the time I was very young I can remember a few who are listed in this book. Atwood Box Mfr.; W. F. Dean who had a wood working shop next to Bens[illegible] Harness Shop; Dr. W. F. Fryer; E. F. Blake; Jenney Coa[illegible] LeBaron Ice; Norman McDermick, teamer; C. H. Morse, Poultry; and Dr. H. A. Smith. I will tell more about this interesting book at some future date.

## WOMEN'S LIB - IN 1837

Women were struggling for equality with men as long ago as 1837, according to an essay in a copy book written in 1837 by Mercy I. Thompson when a pupil in Peirce Academy. Among other dissertations was one titled "Should Woman Aim to Equal Man?" By means of a strong magnifying glass and close application, we have deciphered the piece thusly:

## SHOULD WOMAN AIM TO EQUAL MAN

Surely this question does not mean whether she should equal man in the knowledge of those arts so necessary for man to know, to render him fit for that situation in which it has pleased his Creator to place him? Not whether she had ought to know those things merely because man has learned them, that could be of no use to her in their application! Not whether she should neglect the duties of that sphere appointed by Providence to her sex, for the sake of qualifying herself to perform all those of the other. If we do not perform the duties of our station in all its relations to those around us, will it not produce discord and confusion in the harmony and order of nature, as in a musical instrument if one of the keys shall cease to give forth its peculiar sound. Each individual of the known race must fill a definite place in the relations of life which cannot be filled by any other, while they continue to live and which if not well filled produces most disastrous effects on all around them.

It seems just as absurd to me for woman to aim to equal man as for men to aim to equal woman. One stands as high in the scale of being as the other, only their spheres of action are different. What woman would wish to devote her time so precious and so fleeting, to those abstruse studies in low physick or theology that custom would never allow her to practice or to learn the arts of military tactics that she would never even wish to put in requisition. Even should she arrive at the greatest height of excellence in those arts which can be attained by man — would she not rather be disliked as an amazon who has o'erstepped the modesty of nature — than honored and esteemed as a superior highly gifted woman.

She might be famed for her bright talents, but blamed for their wrong direction. She might excite the wonder of the world but not its respect. It is said that every one falls below her standard of attainment; if so, methinks, it should not be set lower than perfection by the truly ambitious. They surely had ought not to be satisfied with falling below anything less than that those whose foolish ambition is to equal an imperfect man will certainly never become a perfect woman.

It is too miserable a price even to be excused by stupidity — but also it cannot be helped.

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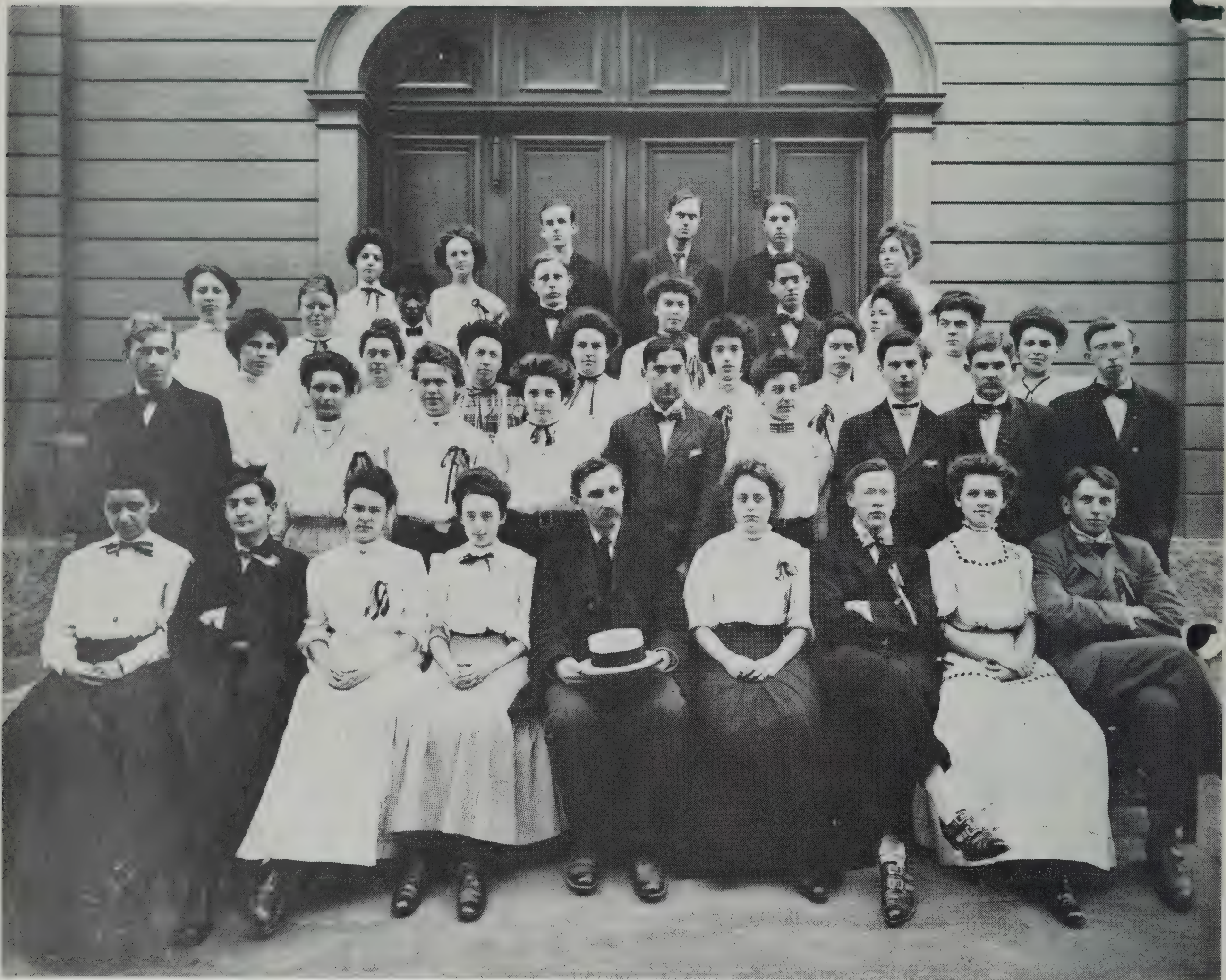

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Third row: Gladys Shockley, Edith Cushing, Gertrude Cox, Evelyn Reed, Lillian O'Neil, Annie McQuade, Ethel Norris.

Fourth row: Helen Robbins, Alice Howes, Zilpah Letcher, Albert Alden, Marjorie Davis, Gilbert Ramsey, Theresa Sheehan. Mattie Snow.

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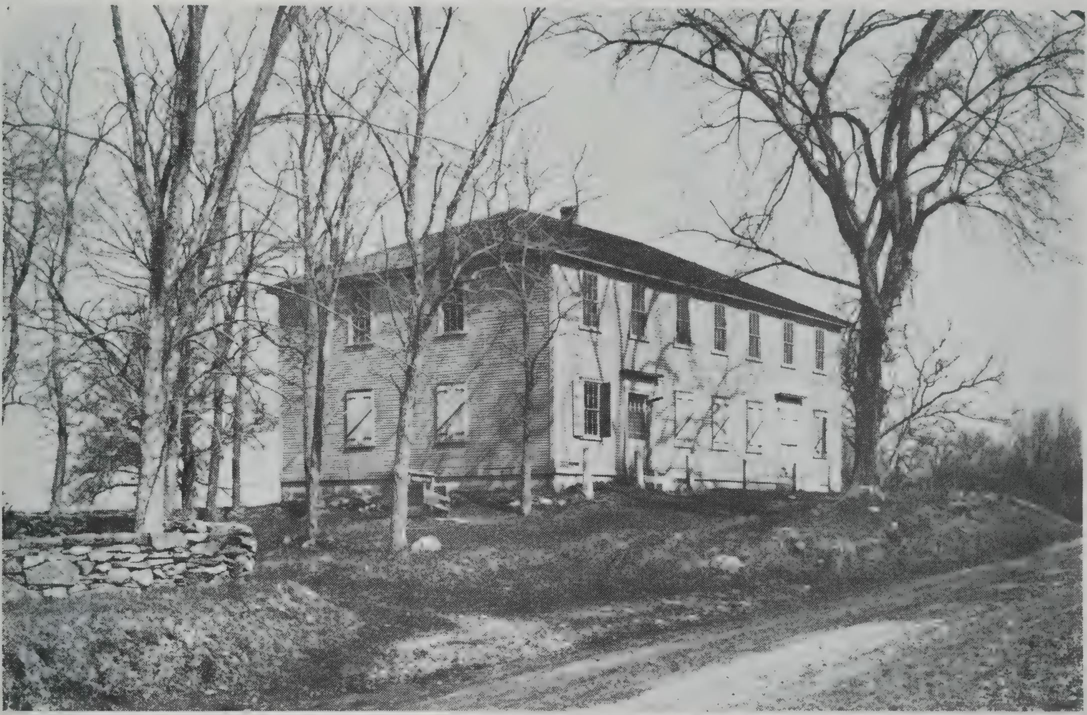

## THE OLD STORE AT MUTTOCK

The old store is no longer an historic landmark in the Muttock section of the town where it was the scene of brisk business when Muttock was the center. The store was one of four located in Muttock in the late 1700's and was headquarters for all the individuals who drifted about Muttock, drawing most of its trade from the workers at the Oliver [illegible] works on the river. This building, erected about 1815, was the second built on the site, the original, built and operated by Gen. Abiel Washburn, having burned. At his death, General Washburn left the business to his son, Philander, who was not the business man his father was, and the business died. In the early 1900's, the building was purchased by Osman Warren and converted into tenements. As years passed, it fell into serious disrepair and had been taken by the state of Massachusetts in connection with the construction of the new Route 44. Demolition was made unnecessary when on the night of February 13, 1963, the building was completely destroyed by fire.

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# THE HISTORY OF NORTHERN NEMASKET - MUTTOCK

by Terence Fitzgerald
*Middleboro Memorial High School*

## INTRODUCTION

The term "Northern Nemasket - Muttock"[1] is a phrase invented by the author to pinpoint the exact area in which this history evolves.

Muttock is situated on the northern plains of the Nemasket River between a widening in the river and a former swampland. This area was occupied by the Nemasket Indians when the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth in 1620.

"The word 'Nemasket' is probably derived from two Indian words, 'Nemah', meaning 'a fish', and its terminal 'et', meaning 'the place of', and at this place the Indians . . . had a fish weir, and from this the surrounding country was named. In the old records it was named Nemasket."[2]

The first settlers from Plymouth gave this region the name of Muttock, from Chesemuttock, one of the last remaining tribes of Nemaskets to reside with the settlers along the river. These Indians lived, for the most part, in peace with the new settlers. Often, however, the Indians found that they could not adapt to a life of co-existence with the white man. For this reason and others, Indians began selling their lands to the settlers and moving into the, as yet, unclaimed wilderness of the interior.

The first sale of land was recorded in 1661, and by 1720 most of the land was owned by the settlers. In 1734, most of the remaining Indians, then living on a reservation, petitioned to sell their land, which they alleged "had become unprofitable by reason of long cultivation, while game in the immediate vicinity had become scarce."[3] The majority of these Indians moved to the more fertile lands of Titicut on the southern plains of the Taunton River. This marked the end of the Indian influence in Muttock.

## CHAPTER I

## PRE-REVOLUTIONARY MUTTOCK

In 1730, Samuel Thomas, an Indian farmer, petitioned the General Court of Plymouth to approve the sale of his land. Samuel Thomas had ". . . lived on & improved a Certain Tract of land, lying . . . upon a hill called Chassemuttock (*sic*) . . . which contains fourteen or fifteen acres and is now worn out by long improvement . . . and your Petitioner being old and feeble and in no wise able to get a livelihood off aforesaid land."[4] The General Court, finding Samuel Thomas to be destitute, approved the sale of land to Mr. Samuel Thatcher of Middleborough.[5]

Samuel Thatcher, for unknown reasons, left Middleborough to take up residence in Plymouth. In doing so, he relinquished his property in Muttock to his father — the Reverend Peter Thatcher. Rev. Thatcher was the third pastor of the First Church of Middleborough, having served as such from 1709 until the time of his death on April 22, 1744. The Reverend Thatcher built a dwelling upon his property on or about 1730.

In 1734, two early settlers, Moses Sturtevant and Peter Brown built a dam across the Nemasket River in place of the old Indian weir.[6] The dam was built directly perpendicular to Rev. Thatcher's land on the south side of the river. In return, the minister received interest in four and one-half sixteenth part of the dam.

In March, 1734, a group of Middleborough forefathers, including Samuel Eddy, petitioned the General Court to build a slitting mill.[7] This having been approved by the Court, Rev. Thatcher obtained four and one-half sixteenth interest in the mill also.[8]

In April of 1744, the Reverend Thatcher died, leaving a valuable estate. His estate was comprised of acreage on the north and south sides of the Nemasket River, his interests in the slitting mill and the grist mill and forge (built shortly before his death), and a dwelling house on the north side of the river.

On August 20, 1744, the entire estate of Rev. Thatcher was conveyed to James Bowdoin — at that time representing Boston in the General Court of Plymouth. Bowdoin was a close friend of Chief Justice Peter Oliver of the Massachusetts Supreme Court who, at this time, had taken up residence in Middleborough.

Bowdoin and Oliver, both from wealthy English families, virtually purchased all of Muttock, including the rights to the dam, the mills, and the forge. They went into business together, manufacturing cookware, cannon, mortar, howitzers, shot and shell.[9]

James Bowdoin, although a resident of Boston, spent a great amount of time at the residence of Judge Oliver in Middleborough. While staying at Oliver Hall, he spent his time overseeing his various business interests and surveying his land.

Oliver Hall was a large and very beautiful mansion located on the Judge's estate which was centered above the present junction of Plymouth Street and Route 44 on the south side of the Nemasket River. Oliver Hall was one of the finest country residences outside of Boston, and host to such notables as John Adams, Governor Hutchinson, and many others.

At the outbreak of the rebellion in 1776, Bowdoin and Oliver found themselves on opposite sides of the political fence. Oliver strongly adhered to his sovereign, George III of England. Bowdoin, in all good conscience, supported the cause of the rebels.

James Bowdoin, later to be a delegate to the first Constitutional Convention, was active in the political phase of the insurrection and went into hiding to escape the British. Judge Oliver was impeached as Chief Justice and stripped of all authority because of his allegiance to the Crown. Fearing the mobs, which had attacked the house of his brother, and destroyed its contents, Oliver fled to Boston. There, General Howe, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces, authorized the protection of all loyal British subjects.

The Revolution had begun.

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.

VOLUME XV 1973 Number 1

Mertie E. Romaine ........................................ Editor

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## CHAPTER II

## THE WASHBURN ERA AND INDUSTRIALIZATION

For seven long years, the Revolution raged. When Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, men began returning to their homes. Many would never return.

The initial phase at the end of the Revolution was sad and awkward, as after any war. Soon, however, the regular routine of life returned and people rejoiced at their newly acquired liberties.

Muttock had incurred many changes brought upon by the wrath of the rebellion. Its most powerful citizen, Peter Oliver, having fled to England, suffered the loss of his mansion, which was burned to the ground by a mob filled with the passions of war. The flight of Judge Oliver created a vacuum which was easily filled by the enterprising James Bowdoin.

Bowdoin bought up large tracts of Judge Oliver's property and established himself as a leading citizen in Muttock, although never a voter. In 1799, he was president of a convention assembled to form a constitution for Massachusetts. It was at this time that he drew up plans to build a mansion to be used as his retirement home. The house was built on the property which he purchased from the estate of the Reverend Thatcher, adjoining the home of the minister.

In 1785, Bowdoin became Governor of Massachusetts. He served his state, with distinction, for one year. Governor Bowdoin's mansion[10] was finished during this term, but his public service kept him busy, in Boston, until his death on November 6, 1790, at the age of sixty-three.

Governor Bowdoin's widow lived at his estate in Muttock for a time. Mrs. Bowdoin was known for her charity and grace. While residing in Muttock, she presented the First Church with a large silver chalice, which is now preserved by the church as a relic.[11]

In 1796, Abiel Washburn purchased the Bowdoin house and the surrounding acreage.[12] Mr. Washburn had recently dissolved a successful business venture at the Four Corners portion of Middleborough, to start an enterprise in Muttock. In partnership with Thomas Weston, who was a member of both the Massachusetts Senate and House, Washburn purchased the controlling rights to the dam and the mills on the Nemasket River, adjoining his property. General Washburn, who served as Commander of the Plymouth County Brigade from 1816 to 1824, also purchased most of the valuable land owned by both Judge Oliver and Governor Bowdoin.

On this land, along the dam, General Washburn built a saw mill, forge, and large coal house; rebuilding the slitting mill and the grist mill. He located two finishing shops for shovels, a large blacksmith shop, as well as many other manufacturing establishments on the banks on both sides of the Nemasket River. In a short time, the enterprising Washburn and Weston had created a successful business, which lasted for over a generation, as well as a sterling reputation which was held in esteem throughout southeastern Massachusetts.[13]

Due largely to the labors of Washburn, "an extensive development occurred in Plymouth County, notable at . . Middleborough. The best iron masters in the province turned out good grades of agricultural implements[14] together with firearms and . . . guns for ships or fortifications."[15]

General Washburn was the son of Edward Washburn, a minuteman during the Revolution, and from him he inherited a large amount of land. This was afterwards lost in business dealings, but by his knowledge and respectability, he later became the wealthiest man and the largest taxpayer in all of Middleborough. The General was consulted on all matters concerning politics and was for many years a leader of the Federal party. He was active in the local militia of the state for thirty-six years and rose to the grade of its commander. General Abiel Washburn died on June 17, 1843 at the age of eighty, leaving a reputation rivaled only by Chief Justice Oliver.

The business of manufacturing shovels was carried on by the General's son Philander, who had been in partnership with his father for several years. Philander Washburn continued to produce farm implements for approximately five years after the death of his father. In 1848, he was elected state senator from Middleborough. The Hon. Philander Washburn was a wealthy man with a great amount of influence. He died in 1882, at the age of eighty-two — a thoroughly successful man.

Although the Washburn family had lost all of its interests in the iron works, they still controlled a large amount of land, as well as the Washburn house. Elizabeth Washburn Grinnell, a daughter of General Washburn, and her husband Charles, lived in the ". . . sumptuous mansion . . ."[16] and operated a large farm on their land.

The Grinnells were ardent abolitionists who were members of the "underground railroad" during the early 1800's. Under the Fugitive Slave Law, any person convicted of aiding a run-a-way slave was subject to fines and imprisonment. Despite the dangers, the Grinnells, together with many other sympathetic northerners, continued helping slaves escape to British Canada[17] until the beginning of the Civil War.

Upon the death of Mr. and Mrs. Grinell, the house and all remaining property was bequeathed to their son, Charles Edward Washburn Grinnell, a respected member of the Boston Bar.

The author feels that this is the proper place in which to end this paper. At about the time of the death of Charles E. W. Grinnell, Muttock changed rapidly. No longer did one family control its land and politics. Many people owned parts of what had been a huge estate. A new era of Big Business replaced the age of agricultural sustenance. It was an era of opportunities for the "little man."

Muttock was non-existent. The once prominent sections of town were enveloped by the whole. No longer would a man say he was from Muttock; he was from Middleborough.

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The age of the Olivers, Bowdoins, and Washburns passed on, as all ages must, to make way for a new era of development — an era of which a history of this type would not be applicable.

## FOOTNOTE ENTRIES

1. Hereforth for methods of conciseness, referred to only as Muttock.

2. Thomas Weston, *History of the Town of Middleboro* (2 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1906), Vol. I, p.1.

3. *Ibid.,* p. 355.

4. Weston, *Middleboro,* p. 356.

5. The records of this time scarcely mention Samuel Thatcher. The author does know, however, that in 1755, Captain Samuel Thatcher valiantly led a force of Middleboro men during one of the latter phases of the French and Indian Wars.

6. A weir is a fence layed across a river by the Indians for the purpose of catching fish.

7. A slitting mill is used in the production of nails.

8. *Ibid,* p. 374.

9. Letter from Peter Oliver, Middleborough, March 21 1756, cited by Weston, *Middleboro,* p. 361.

10. Legend has it that the front door of the Bowdoin mànsion was originally the entrance door of Oliver Hall and was salvaged by the mob during the destruction of the Hall.

11. Weston, *Middleboro.*

12. The property was either purchased directly from Mrs. Bowdoin or from the Bowdoin estate after her death.

13. *Ibid,* p. 379.

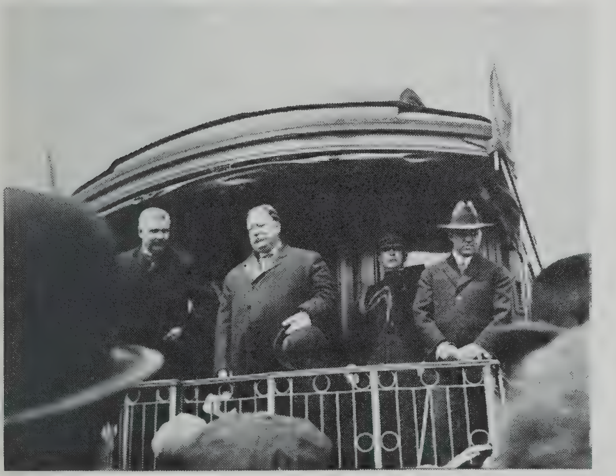
14. The shovels and nails manufactured at Washburn's works found a ready market all over the country as well as in Europe.

15. Alfred B. Hart, *Commonwealth History of Massachusetts* (5 vols.; New York: The States History Company, 1928), Vol. II, p. 407.

16. *Middleboro Gazette* June 4, 1970 reprinted from, no page numbers given.

17. *Ibid.*

* * *



President Taft at the railroad station in Middleboro, April 27, 1912. Standing at the President's right is the late George W. Stetson, then Chairman of the Republican Town Committee. The others are aides to the President.

## OLD POPCORN VENDOR

by Lyman Butler

Some may say that this title does not have anything to do with history but I believe that at the time these persons were doing business, to them it was as important as if they were running a department store or a grocery. I am referring to "Pop" Heath and T. Quigley who both had popcorn carts. I believe Mr. Heath was the first to start out but Mr. Quigley was not far behind. Mr. Heath had a three-wheeled bicycle rig which he pulled like a cart with a rudder wheel in front.

These carts were familiar at the band concerts that were so popular when the Bay State Band was playing at the bandstand on the Town Hall lot. They also took in ball games which were well attended and any parade or other celebration. I can see "Pop" Heath now with the gasoline fire and the big wire mesh popper that must have held six or eight quarts. This was suspended on small chains from the roof and just the right height from the flame. He would just push the handle gently back and forth and soon the corn would begin to pop and fill the big basket when it was done. Then with a deft motion the popper turned upside down into the corner and a big bin. This operation was repeated until a good supply was made. A big old coffee pot of butter melted over the flame and kept warm by holding it over the fire now and again. A generous amount of this was put onto the bag of corn when sold.

Mr. Quigley had a more modern rig which had four wheels (wooden). It took two men to pull this outfit especially if it was going any distance. Generally one of his sons went along to help dispense the corn. I believe Mr. Quigley also had a peanut roaster that you cranked up to make the oven revolve over a gasoline flame.

This was only a part time job for Mr. Quigley whose regular line of work was painting and paper hanging in company with his sons. As for Mr. Heath, I do not recall him doing anything else but peddling popcorn. Today there is always a popcorn cart to be found at fairs and all resorts where there is a crowd. They are similar to the carts of long ago except that most are now mounted on a truck and run by electric motors. Now all you do is put in the corn and a little oil, push a button and wait. Soon the corn starts popping and spills out into the bin. Some still use the same old basket-type popper with propane gas for heat. As for peanut roasters, our two fruit markets run by Tom Panesis and Frank Oneto on opposite sides of Centre Street back in the 1900's each had a steam peanut roaster in front of their stores.

At this writing, the Panesis store is still in operation being run by Tom's son-in-law, Jack Turner, Tom having retired a few years ago. The little steam whistle of those peanut roasters was a pleasant sound and in the winter the plume of steam which rose in the frosty air was a cheery sight. Occasionally one of these old peanut roasters is to be found in a museum.

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES
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Olde Middleborough
in
Plymouth County
Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*
*Certified Genealogist*

The town of Middleborough, or as the Indians called it . . . Nemasket . . . has always covered a great deal of territory. It has been a nucleus or center almost equi-distant from its larger neighbors of Taunton, New Bedford, Fall River and Brockton. Plymouth, Raynham, Rehoboth and the Bridgewaters also have influenced or been influenced in the growth of the town of Middleborough.

This related growth of one town or city to its neighboring towns is true in any location and at any time or period of the town's development. However, it is often a bit surprising to learn how far afield some of our ancestors travelled to find a wife or husband. It is almost amazing sometimes when you consult a map and learn that even with our modern superhighways it takes us some two to three hours by automobile to reach the 'home-town' of an ancestor's family.

In 1776 there were 4479 persons in Middleboro according to an enumeration made that summer. The following winter another enumeration gives 1066 males of 16 years and upward . . . and included in this figure were five Indians and eight negroes. In 1791 (a year after the first national census was taken) the town of Middleborough had 4526 persons. In a period of fifteen years the population had increased by only 47 persons.

Obviously one of two things must be the answer to this very nearly identical population figure. Mortality lists for this period do not indicate a heavy death rate so this can not be given as the full explanation.

If we look at the records of other towns for this same period we learn that an emigration from the town of Middleborough contributed quite heavily to the settling of the towns of New Salem and Shutesbury in Franklin county in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and also of Woodstock in the state of Vermont.

No town is ever established . . . and continued . . . by one group of settlers. It is always a question of gains and losses . . . of additions and subtractions from year to year. Some family names become extinct in just a few years from the date of settlement of that particular town. Other names of first settler families continue on to the present day and descendants . . . many of whom do not even know they are descendants (and frequently care less) are listed in a current telephone book or street directory.

Migration is not the only cause of population change or the fading out of a particular surname in the area. Some families are most prolific and the original settler has four sons who in turn have four sons each to carry on the family name. Another first settler will have only girls so the name dies out in the area in a generation or two. In other instances there are no children so the name dies out in the first generation.

As time went on Middleborough received as inhabitants some of the children and grandchildren of Mayflower passengers. Descendants of these same families also left the Plymouth area for eastern Connecticut towns . . . other Mayflower descendants stopped first in Middleborough, moved on to Taunton or went directly to Connecticut.

We must remember that these early families had no easy or quick means of travel. Much of it had to be on foot, hand-drawn carts or sleds. Frequently the man of the house went on ahead to that "greener grass" and built himself his rude shelter or log cabin and returned the following year to get his family and their belongings.

Fear of Indians, swollen creeks and rivers and other dangerous happenings often prompted our early ancestors to travel in groups of three or four families. This is true in this early period of our settlements as well as when the covered wagons or Conestogas pulled out to help settle the West.

To compare a current telephone book listing for Middleborough with the list of names in the Middleborough census of 1790 (the first Federal Census) will show many changes. Many of the names still show us such as Thomas, Wood, Ryder, Cushman, Holmes and many others. By the same token many names given in this 1790 census have died out as being residents of Middleborough. Some names have been altered in spelling or shortened in form from the original spelling.

It is the restless settlers who seek greener pastures or who seek to know what is going on 'up ahead' that have become the pioneers of the advancing frontiers of our land. By the mid 1700's there were many descendants of the Mayflower passengers in all the settled areas of our country. Not every Eaton currently listed in the Middleborough telephone book can be said to be 'related' to the Mayflower line simply on the strength of the appearance of the name in the early Middleborough records as well as in current records. This would be just as true of the Fuller surname, the Brewsters, Standish or any other of the early settling families. However, chances are pretty good if any one is sufficiently interested to establish his lineage.

Many families have records, family Bibles, diaries and the like . . . which give the needed proof. Other families have only the tradition that 'the family goes back to the Mayflower.'

Our fifty states today are a 'melting pot' of many heritages. However, Middleborough can become the point or area of connection for many a present-day Idaho, California, Texas or even Hawaii or Alaska resident to get on board the Mayflower or a passage on the great Winthrop Fleet of some 30 vessels in 1630.

## AMERICA IN THE MAKING

On the afternoon of June 8, 1928 there was presented by pupils of the Middleboro High School one of the finest pageants ever seen in Middleboro. The excellent performance was made even more impressive because the entire pageant took place in the beautiful natural setting on the banks of the Nemasket River in the rear of the High School building on North Main Street. Those who viewed the pageant some forty-five years ago will still remember the opening scene as Indians in their colorful costumes paddle down the river.

A group of Pilgrims gather on the river bank and are greeted by the Indians. The story of American history unfolds in scenes from the Revolutionary War, the Civil War and the Twentieth Century. Following is an account of the event as reported in the Middleboro Gazette:

Despite the unfavorable weather conditions of the early morning Saturday, the skies cleared and it was an ideal afternoon for the historical pageant, "AMERICA IN THE MAKING." Elaborate preparations had been made for the affair and the various scenes were enacted with excellent effect, and the several hundred spectators were generous in their applause. The pageant was staged in the lot bordering the river below the playground in the rear of the Memorial High School and was presented by the Cosmos Club of which Meredith Eller is president, who took the part of the Spirit of History; Miss Elinor Kinsman, vice-president, impersonated the pageant's leading character, the Spirit of America, while Helen Hoard, secretary, danced in the Minuet group, and the treasurer, Robert Belmont, is a member of the orchestra. Miss Lorna Paquin assumed the role of the Spirit of Freedom. The spot selected for the pageant is an ideal one and is closely identified with the early history of the town. It was nearly in range with the famous ball fired by Isaac Howland with John Tomson's gun from the old fort and which fatally wounded the Indian across the river on the rock, which is familiarly known as "Indian Rock," or "hand rock," so called from the imprint of a man's hand upon it. With a little improvement this could be one of the best natural locations for outdoor attractions in all the country round.

A feature of the pageant, not on the program, was the presence of real blooded Indians, a group of three, of which Mantasikaun, who is known as Clarence W. Wixon, gave an exhibition of Indian dancing, true to the traditions of the Red Man. This proved a fitting introduction. Following his exhibition the pages, Doris and Ruth Baldwin, preceded the Spirit of America, Spirit of Freedom and Spirit of History. The Spirit of History is called by America who reviews the making of America, and the Spirit of Freedom shows her part in the development. This was accompanied by a series of intricate dances by the Spirit of Freedom.

The first scene portrayed the Indians, Freedom dancing and beckoning the Indian squaws. While they are dancing the braves paddle down the river in canoes. Meanwhile the Pilgrims appear and are greeted by the Indians who point out to them the land which they are to share and together in the shadow of the tepee they cement their friendship by smoking the pipe of peace. Those participating in this scene were: Indian squaws: Lemira Smith, Anne Jacintho, Thelma McLeod, Irene Carey, Georgina Card, Alice Wright, Ruth Tripp, Eunice Allen, Ruth Dunham, Virginia Caswell, Dorothy Westgate.

Indian chief: Freeman Black. Indian braves; Stanley Moles, George Harlow, Vincent Sukeforth, George Bosari, Melville Wilbur. Pilgrims: Alfred Wood, James Dufur, Philip Stafford.

In Part 2, History introduces and Freedom calls in the Revolutionary group. In this portion of the program the graceful minuet is daintily danced and with their colorful, colonial garb the participants made a very pretty scene. Washington in the person of Roger Leonard, approaches with a dilapidated British flag which he requests the girls to mend. In the midst of their work on the flag Jefferson, whose part is taken by Frederick Carey, comes in and reads from the Declaration of Independence, the immortal document. Hardly has the peal of the Liberty bell died out when Betsy Ross presents Washington a new Colonial flag in place of the discarded one. The forming of the flag by the girls is one of the most brilliant parts of the whole play. Those composing this scene were: minuet girls, Carolyn Fish, Charlotte Smith, Carmen Cerda, Una Hilliker, Ruth Paun, Helen Hoard, Esther Richer, Ruth Glidden, Beryl Dupont, Natalie Thibault, Corinne Cushman, Geraldine Stafford; minuet boys; Stanley Ware, Frederick Eayrs, Albert Carey, Frederick Shurtleff, Herbert Johnstone, Lawrence Bissonnette, Roger Weston, Donald Welch, Oliver Donner, Sheldon Kelley, John Sullivan, Ellsworth Beckman.

Part 3, the shortest of the entire pageant, dealt with the westward expansion era. Joseph B. Thomas, who made and loaned a covered wagon, drove the oxen and in the wagon were Mildred Bowman and Hazel Long. Others contributing to this scene were horseback riders, Elinor West, Elizabeth Savage, Vincent Sullivan and Alice Anderson; railroad workers, Charles Gerrior, Lawrence Newton, Norman Landstrom; California gold diggers, Elwin Hanson, Harvey McNeil, James Brooks.

**WESTWARD HO. The Expansion Era**

In Part 4, Freedom sadly calls in the Civil War group. The slaves are working in the fields. General Grant, represented by Leslie Hinckley, appears and leads the soldiers and slaves to war, those left behind waving good-bye. A northern soldier and a southern soldier, George Washburn and Everett Newton, sang "Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground," and Lincoln appears on the scene in the person of Edmund Churchill and reads from the Gettysburg address. Upon the return of the troops with Clara Barton (Millicent Porter) attending a wounded soldier, General Lee (William Fillebrown) surrenders his sword to General Grant, who promptly returns it. Included in the characters in this portion of the play were: Negroes, Dominick Guidaboni, Manuel Medeiros, Robert Goodwin; soldiers, and women of 1861, Leslie Hinckley, Roland Morse, Snowden Thomas, Joseph Gagnon, Donald Kraus, Roderick McKenzie, Ernest Spencer, Robert Archer, Della Huntley, Dorothy Kinsman, Hazel Maxim, Hazel Hanson, Louise Desrosier, Doris Lewis, Elizabeth Roht, Mary Allison, Helen Fargo.

The closing part was the Twentieth Century scene. The Spirit of Freedom gayly beckons in the immigrants from several European countries, including Italy, Spain, Germany, Sweden, Russia, Poland, France, Ireland, Scotland and Holland. These immigrants in their vari-colored native dress made a very pretty picture as they danced, together with modern college youths who sing their college songs. Suddenly the bugle calls to arms and soldiers and Red Cross nurses salute America. The immigrants also salute and pledge their allegiance and the college youths offer America their support. While the "U" and "S" are being formed the entire cast returns to the stage while all, including the audience, sing "America." In this part were the following: immigrants, Spanish, Gladys Kraus, Lois Thomas; Italian, Edna Dunham, Barbara Vinal; Swedish, Lillian Maki, Eloise Nielsen; Irish, Cecile Brink, Doris Davol; Scotch, Dorothy Shaw, Mary Ferraguto; French, Bernice Keough, Ellen Rogers; German, Evelyn Sylvia, Francis Warren; Russian, Agnes Krikorian, Helen Dutra; Dutch, Louise Casey, Arleen Huxley; Polish, Clair Sullivan, Cora Lavally; soldiers of 1917, Frederick Allen, William Alfred Parkonen, William McFarlin, Albert Gerrior, Donald Quindley, Donald Holmes, Albert Mitchell, Russell Hollis; Red Cross nurses, Myrtle Hulsman, Helen Jacques, Olive Chamberlain, Stella Robbins, Eleanor Brown, Agnes Murphy, Hazel Farrington, Jeannette Bassett, Cherry Paquin, Alice Guidaboni.

To Miss Doris Cochrane, faculty adviser of the Cosmos Club, and teacher of American history, is chiefly due the credit of the pageant to which she has given largely of her time and talents these past few weeks. Miss Sylvia Comley, art supervisor of the Middleboro schools, had charge of the stage setting, which was very artistic, and the costumes. Supervisor Wirt B. Phillips, as usual, added materially to the success of the program by directing the glee clubs and orchestra in selections appropriate to the several scenes. Miss Una Hilliker of Bridgewater Normal school assisted in coaching the dances.

Closing scene of the pageant as the entire cast and au-dience join in singing "America."

## HISTORY OF AN OLD LANTERN

With the wealth of interesting and valuable articles of historic importance in the Middleborough Historical Museum, one antique artifact the collection lacked was a Paul Revere lantern. During the past summer this long desired asset came as a gift through the courtesy of Mrs. George S. Brown of West Bridgewater. The lantern was left to the Museum by Mrs. Lottie M. Howland who wrote the accompanying history which greatly enhances the value and interest of this much appreciated gift:

"This old Paul Revere Lantern belonged to the Thomson-Sturtevant families, two of the oldest families of Middleboro, Plympton and Halifax, Massachusetts.

John Thomson settled in that part of Middleboro that later became Halifax, and Samuel Sturtevant settled on that part of Plympton that later became Halifax.

John Thomson (1616-1696) married in 1645 Mary Cook.

Their son, Thomas Thomson (1664-1742) married in 1715 Mary Morton. This Thomas built the old house still standing (1956) on Thompson Street, from which this old Lantern came. The house is on the left hand side of the road, going towards the center of the Town, just before one gets to the old Thompson Burying Ground, which said Thomas gave to the Town to be used for that purpose FOREVER.

Their son, Amasa Thomson (1722-1807) married in 1743 Lydia Cobb and he was the first owner of the Lantern, purchased probably about 1788.

Their daughter, Ruth Thompson (1745-1832) married in 1764 Simeon Sturtevant (1742-1822) and going to live in the old house, they too used the Lantern.

Their son, Simeon Sturtevant (1765-1851) married in 1790 Margaret Johnson (1766-1850). They too lived in the old house and inherited the Lantern.

Their son Simeon Sturtevant (1803-1874) never married, but lived in the old house with his brother and wife, and he left the Lantern to his niece, Margaret, daughter of his brother, Ward Sturtevant.

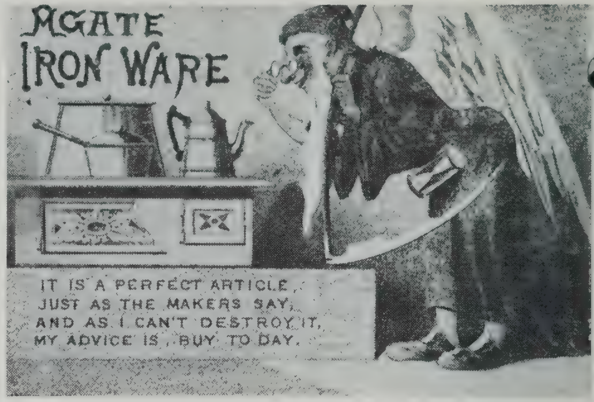
This niece, Margaret H. Sturtevant (1839-1918) married November 4, 1856, Daniel P. Blake and in 1875 they went to live in the home of her ancestors, that same old house.

Their daughter, Charlotte Cushman Blake (1857-1942) married in 1876 John Franklin Howland. She had lived in the old house with her parents until she went from there as a bride.

She, in turn, gave it to her daughter, Lottie M. Howland, who had also lived in the old house with her grandparents, thus making her of the seventh generation that had lived in that old house and owned the Lantern.

Thinking that it should be preserved, I am now giving it to the Middleboro Historical Society, where I hope that it will always be kept as a momento and reminder of OLD DAYS IN HALIFAX, Plymouth County, Massachusetts.

Lottie M. Howland
August 22, 1956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The store was noted for its lively and amusing advertisements, all originating in the fertile mind of George E. Doane. Most of these were signed, "George E. Doane, The Hardware Man." An example:

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SAID TO THE STOPPLE

Yes, the corkscrew is still in business, helping out in tight places. Nail pullers, Clam Hammers, Tweezers, Wrecking bars, Tack Pullers, Forceps, Crow Bars, Peavies, are also ready to assist you when you need a friend, and

GEORGE E. DOANE
THE HARDWARE MAN

is also in business ready to help

In August, 1938, the business was purchased by George A. Shurtleff and continued under the firm name of George A. Shurtleff & Son until 1946, when Mr. Shurtleff passed away and the name was changed to Shurtleff Hardware Company. In 1973 the venerable firm closed its doors after serving Middleboro and surrounding areas for 127 years.

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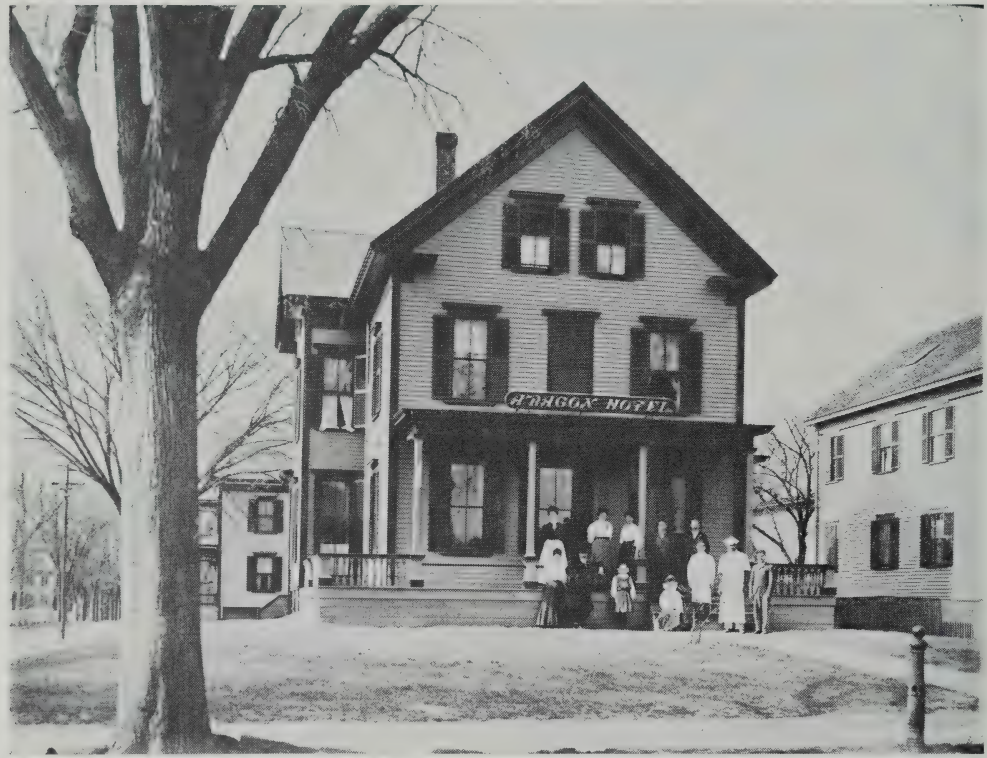

## THE ARAGON HOTEL

The Aragon Hotel was one of the early hostelries of the town. As early as 1884 there was a hotel on the corner of Centre and Pearl Streets. It was then known as "Mrs. Wilde's Boarding House." Through the years the hotel bore the names of "The Tremont House," "Hotel Linwood," with a variety of owners. In 1904, it became the Hotel Aragon with James H. Dalton as proprietor. Rates were $2.00 per day. Mr. Dalton's ownership was brief. In 1907 the hotel became Sweet's Hotel and S. S. Sweet advertised dinners for twenty-five cents. This fact may have contributed to his difficulties. He had considerable trouble obtaining a victualer's license and in 1908 Alphonse Burke was listed as owner followed the same year by J. R. Williams. In 1909, G. Nadeau, proprietor of the Central House in Onset, leased the property, and in 1910 the hotel again became the Aragon Hotel conducted by Margaret S. Kayajanian, Daniel F. Danielson and H. Hachadoorian. Mr. Danielson maintained his interest in the hotel until 1964 when it was sold to Mrs. Martin Schultz of Norton. In recent years the appearance of the hotel has changed to such an extent it could hardly be recognized as the building in the photograph. As of this year, the Aragon Hotel is no more, the building having been converted into a business block.

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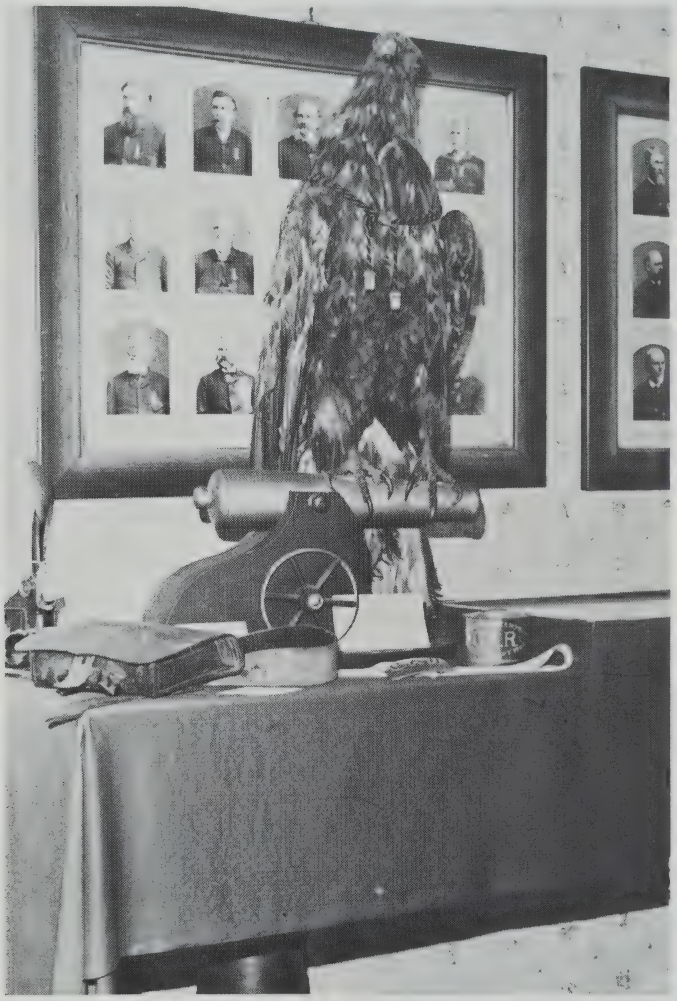

Photo by Clint Clark

This noble bird sits in the Civil War Room of the Middleborough Historical Museum. It was once the property of E. W. Peirce Post 8, Grand Army of the Republic. No one knows for certain where the eagle came from or how it came to be sort of a mascot for E. W. Peirce Post 8. In the year 1938 there appeared in an issue of the Middleboro Gazette an item stating that a large eagle with a wing spread of seven feet had been shot in the East Middleboro section of the town. One wonders if this could have been the eagle.

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E. W. Peirce Post 8 was organized March 13, 1867 and chose its name to honor General Ebenezer W. Peirce of Assonet who had an enviable war record, being the hero of many battles in the Rebellion and the war with Mexico. His right arm was carried away by a cannon ball in the seven day's fight before Richmond in 1862. General Peirce fought all the way to Appomattox often being seen riding with the bridle rein in his teeth and a sword in his hand. The local Post was presented a gavel made from wood of the oak tree under which General Peirce lost his arm. The gavel was presented by Louis R. Peirce of Worcester, Massachusetts, who secured the wood for the gavel.

General Peirce was the author of a history of the Peirce family and of an Indian history, published in one large volume. He died at his home in Assonet in 1902 at the age of eighty years.

E. W. Peirce Post 8 was organized with eighteen charter members, the instituting exercises held in American Hall. A. T. Wales was the first Commander.

In 1904, the Post voted to erect a building, secured a tract of land on North Main Street, and began work of construction. Plans were progressing well when it was discovered the underpinning was not substantial enough to hold a brick structure. The project was therefore abandoned after which the site (next to the present fire station) was purchased by E. J. Kelley who used the already completed foundation for a dwelling.

The Post met for many years on the second floor of the Peirce Academy Building and this became known as Grand Army Hall. After the Academy was torn down in 1932, the members moved all their equipment to and held their meetings in the old engine house of the Middleborough Fire Department on School Street.

As years passed, the membership dwindled steadily until there were few members left, and meetings of the Post became infrequent. The last surviving member was George Washington Thomas who died in his 101st year in the house where he was born in Plympton, Massachusetts.

When the old engine house was torn down in 1958, all the properties of the Post were brought to the Middleborough Public Library and stored in the attic. In 1960 the Middleborough Historical Museum was established and the possessions of E. W. Peirce Post 8 were transferred to the Museum and formed the nucleus of the Civil War Room. It is in this room where majestically stands the eagle shown on the cover of this issue.

In 1937, when the ranks were fast diminishing. The veteran on the right is George Washington Thomas. There is a note on the back of the picture stating the combined ages of the men was 463 years.

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.

VOLUME XV 1974 Number 2

Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES
of
Olde Middleborough
in
Plymouth County
Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*
*Certified Genealogist*

If we were to take a look backwards into the early history of Middleborough in the days of the first settlers, we would find many families listed whose surnames do not appear on any current street or voting list.

Frequently we will wonder what happened . . . did the family just move away to another town? Or did the branch of the family living in Middleborough have only daughters so that the name became extinct in this locality?

Back in the late 1800's and until the mid 1900's it was not at all uncommon to find a direct descendant living in the same house that a grandfather or a great grandfather had lived in and in many instances had built. Occasionally it might even be the same house that a very first settler of Middleborough owned and/or occupied.

In looking over the list of first settlers of Middleborough we find names that are unfamiliar to us . . . we do not know anyone of the particular surname nor do we find the name in the current street list. Of course, the reverse is also true . . . there are many names that we find in today's phone book and frequently the family is directly related to the original family who settled in Middleborough in the late 1600's or in the early 1700's.

However, we can't be too cocksure and glibly state that the Alden family on such and so a street is a direct descendant of John Alden and Priscilla (Mullins) Alden. Chances are quite good that a direct lineage could be proved . . . but just because the name is the same is not sufficient proof.

The early records of Middleborough were destroyed in King Philip's War which ended 12 August 1676. King Philip, the Wampanoag chief, and many Narragansett Indians were killed. Therefore, Middleborough's earliest list of settlers is dated 1675. On that list we find such names as . . . Bump, Cobb, Coombs, Clark, Dawson, Dunham, Eaton, Eddy, Fuller, Haskall, Hoskins, Howland, Irish, Miller, Morton, Nelson, Pratt, Ring, Shaw, Thomas, Tinkham, Tomson, Vaughn, Walker, Wright, and Wood. To this list some additional names may be added of families who were here early . . . namely, Billington, Holmes, Nelson and Warren.

By the time of the Revolutionary War, or more properly termed the War of Independence, we find additional names appearing and other family names that have disappeared. The Town Militia had been set up by order of the General Court and Middleborough had been apportioned into four districts. In April of 1775 these companies were re-organized into a company of regular militia. We find these additional family names . . . Washburn, Sproutt, Pickens, Ellis, Clapp, Bennett, Armstrong, Bryant, Rickard, Cox, Raymond, Redding, Darling, Palmer, Richmond, Leonard, Thomas, Sampson and Ryder, Cushman, Hackett, Lyon, Macomber, Bly, Hoar, Mosher, Hayford, Hunt, Bishop, Hoskins, Fry, Douglas, Canedy, Weston, Johnson, Booth, Jones, . . . also Paddock, Perrington, Benson, Read, Churchill, Omey, Ransom, Jucket. In a list of the First Company of Minute Men we find Randall, Bates, Torrey, Finney, Harlow, and LeBaron. And others were Perkins, Chamberlain, Briggs, Barden, Elms, Fuller, Williamson, Chase, Peirce, Parris, Muxum, Hathaway, Hoar, Cole, Cary, Handy, Holloway, Ashley, Caswell, Hall, Hinds, Wade, Tupper, Keith, White and Drake. There are still a few other surnames such as McCully, Aldrich, Austin, Clemens, Dean, Gibsby, Foster, Morse, Strowbridge, Thatcher, Townsend, Borden, Ballinton, Snow and Sherman. McFarlin, Leach, Freeman, Porter, Murdock, Wilder, Bumpus, Ripley, Keen, Douglas, Lucas, Russell, Lovell, Trowant, Armstrong and Evans.

Many of the same family names appear on these lists and the lists are far from complete. However, it must be remembered that Middleboro was an enlistment station and some of these men may have enlisted from Middleborough but have lived elsewhere. These names are, however, quite representative of the area. Without doubt . . . if you are a Thomas, a White or a Hathaway and your grandparents were Middleborough residents . . . there would be a family relationship with some of these patriots. Roughly calculated some twenty years later . . . the war started in 1774, lasted until 1783 . . . came the first census which was taken in 1790. Money was scarce, farms had been devastated in many areas where fighting had occured . . . coupled with the casualties of the long war . . . many families moved on. For some it was to forget that young sixteen-year-old Johnnie who enlisted as a drummer boy lost his life less than a week after enlisting. For others it was the bounty land offered in other areas, notably Maine (which was part of Massachusetts until 1820). Money had run out and many soldiers were given land instead of wages.

Many of the same family names appear, however, such as Shaw, Perkins, Churchill, Thomas, Cole, Barrows and so on. In 1790 there are new names also such as Short, Cornish, Harris, Whitten, Carver, Morey, Gibbs, Lamson, Tripp, French, Gammons, Orcutt, Pope, Kinsley, Kingman, Beale, Baccus, Tisdale and many, many others.

To jump into present-day Middleboro is a long jump but there are many of these early Middleborough family names appearing in the local phone book and street directory. Also there are many families who have moved into Middleboro since 1900 and have married into these old Middleborough families. Spelling differences have been indicative also of name changes. To many of us it is an interesting challenge to learn who we are and where our families first put down roots.

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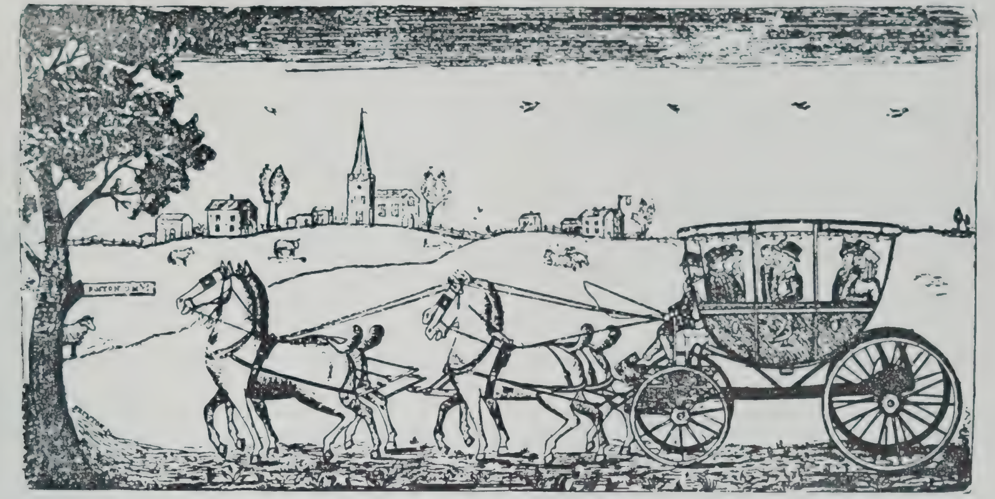

## STAGES TO JETS

By Lyman Butler

The first mode of mass transportation was the stagecoach. In Weston's History (1905) stagecoaches were mentioned briefly in several instances in relation to the old Taverns in various parts of town but not too much was mentioned except the New Bedford to Boston line which stopped at several places between these two cities. This being an historical magazine I would like to tell of some taverns not so well known but which played an important part in the early days of stagecoach travel. I am indebted to the late Nat. and Alfred Cushing who lived on East Street in South Middleboro for telling me years ago that the building on France Street which in later years was occupied by (Double Brook) Nat. Shurtleff was formerly a Stage Tavern on the route from Plymouth to New Bedford via Rochester. Food and drink was available at this place. The route was from Carver up France to East to what later was Route 58 thence across Wareham Street to Rochester, Acushnet to New Bedford. According to Elmer Sisson there was an earlier tavern on the corner of Pine Street and France operated by a William Thomas of a few generations ago. There was a stable at this inn and it was possible to change horses here as well as partake of victuals and drink. Back in Warrentown when I was quite young the late Sylvanus Bump told us youngsters about the Weston Tavern which was directly across the street from his residence. He told of the horses which were pastured in the open field off Plain Street and which were used to change if needed on the New Bedford to Boston run via Plymouth and Summer Streets on to Bridgewater; also the Stage from Plymouth stopped here.

The late William (Bill) Lewis told me of the house he lived in at the corner of Bedford and Clay Streets which was a stage stop on the Turnpike as well as the famous Sampson's Tavern and King Philip's at what is now Lakeville. These were on the Turnpike that was built in early 1800. Sproat's and Weston's were 1700 Taverns and were used by soldiers and civilians alike during the Revolution. Probably there were others lesser known and not recorded.

Freight was carried on big canvas covered wagons similar to the Western settlers. These conveyances were used till steam train service became available in the mid 1800's; this would be the second phase of transportation.

The railroads of Middleboro were pretty well covered by either Weston's or Mertie Romaine's History of 1969 as were the trolley electric car lines. Also John Rockwell had a fine article on "The Birth and Burial of the Trolley" in an early Antiquarian. (Vol. 1 #3). The first trolley car ran from Brockton to New Bedford through Middleboro in 1899 while the Buzzards Bay line started in 1901 and in 1900 the Taunton line came as far as Farrar's Waiting Room.

The line I remember most was the Bay State, as I first saw the light of day in 1905 and the line had changed hands a couple of times by then. The electric car was a boon to many workers and shoppers alike as while the steam train went through several towns, you had to go to the station to get the train but the electrics went through regular streets most of the time and had special stopping places where a white ring would be painted on the power poles which were quite close together. Though the life of the trolley was short in Middleboro (1899-1929) they ran successfully for many years and if the automobile hadn't come into such popularity they would have been going now. (Too bad they are not around now, traffic being what it is). The Bay State Line was probably the largest company (track wise) in the vicinity. On the Middleboro, New Bedford route, cars ran from Bridgewater to Taunton via Raynham and toward Boston to Mattapan. There were probably other routes but these were the ones I remember, especially the ones to either Highland Park at Brockton Avon line and Lakeside Park at Freetown, both operated by Bay State.

In the early days of the trolley the Brockton-Middleboro line ended at Lund's Corner in New Bedford where you had to change cars for the remainder of the trip to the Center, taking a Union Street Railway Car. Later the Bay State cars were allowed to run on Union's rail to Center New Bedford. In early times each railway had to have their own right-of-way though the power was shared for a price. Wareham was the

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source for this district. For several years the Taunton-Middleboro line went only to Farrar's and you had to change cars to go to the center or further (1900-1919). After that the Taunton cars were allowed to use Bay State tracks to Tripp's Waiting Room. After Bay State ceased operation the Taunton line was allowed to run as far as the Lakeville Sanitarium as there were many workers there who had no transportation. This continued till the trolleys went out and at that time the line ran buses over the same route for several years but even they could not operate at a profit as more and more people were buying autos. This brings us to the third phase of the transportation problem, the bus. All routes used by the trolleys were supplanted by buses. New England, subsidy of Old Colony R.R., ran from Brockton to New Bedford via Middleboro; also from Boston to the Cape. Gateway Bus Line of Wareham took over the Middleboro-Wareham run till 1931 after which Charles Whitney ran buses to South Middleboro and Rock. While Davidson Buses ran from Middleboro to Bridgewater, a couple of short lived jitney lines ran through the Warrentown section to Bridgewater. Though no trolley line ever came into being for the Middleboro-Plymouth route, one had been planned but it was decided there was not enough business, so after the steam trains stopped running in the early twenties a bus line was started by a man named Charles Gurtin from Carver. This line prospered for a few years as High School pupils were brought to Middleboro then. Other bus lines carried school children also after the trolleys stopped. Gurney's line gave way to Interstate Trans. Co. which ran buses from Taunton to Plymouth via Middleboro and later from Providence on a limited schedule which still makes one trip a week. The fourth phase of travel is by air, by now everyone was getting speed-minded and airplane travel was coming into its own. Anyone who saw the flight of Harry Atwood's fragile plane at Fall Brook shortly after the turn of the century (1911) would not believe that over the ensuing years such strides in aviation would be accomplished. I had the pleasure of seeing those historical flights at Fall Brook Farm although I had seen this plane a few days earlier when Harry Atwood and Lincoln Beechy flew over and around the town in a greeting to Mrs. Maria Atwood, Harry's Aunt, who lived on Thompson Street where I went to school. The nearest we got to mass air travel was around 1930 when the dirigible "Neponset" was touring the vicinity and when at Camp Joe Hooker passengers were given a ride over town for a few dollars. The present generation knows how the aviation industry had gone ahead by leaps and bounds. We have an airport at North Middleboro but only small gasoline motor propeller planes use it. While for larger airports jet planes of various sizes carry any amount of passengers up to three or four hundred and more. Even going to the moon on rocket ships is getting quite common. Outside of the early stagecoach I and many other Senior Citizens can remember these other conveyances and reminisce about the pleasant memories on these various modes of transportation in and around Middleboro. A few older residents can probably recall this jump from Stagecoach to Jets.

## A PASSENGER ON THE MAYFLOWER?

There is some question whether a certain small and delicate plate traveled with the Pilgrims from England to America on the Mayflower. It is a very pretty little plate, made of soft paste and about four inches in diameter. The background is a soft cream with decoration in blue. The center of the plate shows a rural scene, a woman and a man who is evidently a shepherd since his shepherd's crook is lying near and a shepherd dog stands by. There are lambs in the foreground with houses and trees forming the background for the entire scene.

Accompanying the plate when purchased was a paper, very old and crumbling, with the following information:

"This plate was brought over from England by Mr. Henry Sampson, born July 8, 1675 and was married August 24, 1721 to Miss Joanna Vaughan.

"Their daughter Zilpha was married to Mr. Joseph Bryant of Plymouth.

"Their daughter Ruth married William Shaw of Middleboro.

"Their daughter Sarah married John Cleale (?) of Dedham April 15, 1821.

"Their son John Horace married Mary Ann Rounds of Taunton July 1, 1846.

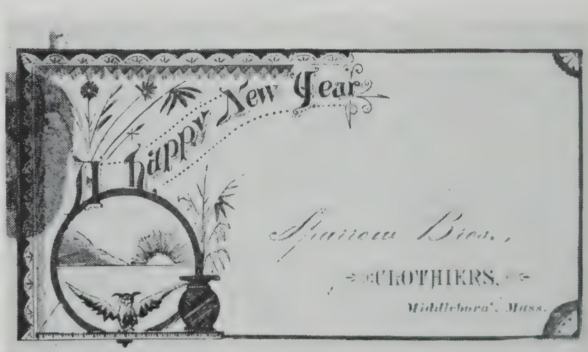
"Their daugher Alice Jane Cleale (?) married L. Crocker Lovell of Mansfield December 16, 1870.

"Their son Willard Crocker, a descendant in the 10th generation from Henry Sampson, is the present owner of the plate."

After the genealogical data is this note:

"The plate Allie Comwall of California has. The plate was given to Flossie. She gave it to Allie Comwall in 1907. She has the Mayflower Plate."

Whether or not this plate came over in the Mayflower, it is a very interesting antique. The genealogy seems authentic. It would be most interesting to know more about Allie Comwall. The plate was purchased a few years ago in an antique shop in Belmont, Massachusetts. The present owner is Mr. Roger W. Tillson of Middleboro who shared with us this fascinating bit of Americana.



## SPARROW BROS.

Sparrow Bros., was one of the oldest established men's clothing stores in the town. The firm began business in 1880 when J. Augustine Sparrow and his brother Harry P. Sparrow purchased the stock of men's clothing and furnishings of M.A. Powers, then conducting a store on Water (Wareham) Street. Practically the entire career of Sparrow Bros., was passed in the building at 43 Centre Street. Harry Sparrow died in 1909, and Mr. Augustine Sparrow then assumed full control until he retired in 1929 and the business was closed.

The Sparrow brothers were also interested in the firm Whitman, Sparrow & Company. In 1894, Mr. Fred N. Whitman purchased the department store of George Ryder and the two Sparrow brothers became partners in the firm. In later years the business changed hands several times, the last owners being James McNeil and his son, Walter McNeil. The firm went out of business in 1962.

Tom Thumb Place

## HOUSE BUILT BY GENERAL AND MRS. TOM THUMB

### Plymouth Street, Middleboro

Built in the late 1800's during the most prosperous period of their lives, General and Mrs. Tom Thumb built this house across the street from Lavinia's girlhood home. The interior was scaled to the dimunitive size of the tenants and furnished with miniature furniture. Sold in 1910, the interior has been completely remodeled.

* * *

## TRADITIONS OF FAMOUS OLD HOUSES IN MIDDLEBORO

The following article, part of a much longer one, is contained in an old scrap book given to the Middleborough Historical Museum. The book contains clippings of many of the articles written in the middle and late 1800's by Granville Temple Sproat. This article is apparently one of these since it is signed G.T.S., Granville Temple Sproat, to whom is owed a great debt of gratitude for preserving in this manner much important Middleboro history that otherwise would be lost.

*The Old Parsonage of the First Congregational Church.*

Of the old parsonage, called by the old inhabitants the "Mansion House," and occupied by the Rev. Peter Thatcher during the whole of his ministry, tradition has left the following record:

It was built with four gables, after the fashion of those days, was large and roomy on the ground, and opened into a court, or enclosed yard in front. It was used as a place of worship by the Rev. Mr. Conant, while his own meeting house, on the Upper Green, was preparing; and here he resided until his own dwelling house was built. It was here he entertained Whitefield[1] on his memorable visit to Middleboro in 1746. That visit was long remembered and talked about by the old inhabitants of Middleboro. The people from all parts of the great town came flocking together to hear him. They filled all the aisles of the old meeting house, early on Sabbath morning, so that there was no way of passing to the pulpit through the crowd. A ladder had to be procured to enable the great preacher to reach the pulpit through the window in the rear. He preached with tremendous power and effect. His text was a very unique one. "I am this day weak, though a crowned king." And he proved himself that day a crowed king — a king over the minds of men, swaying them as he pleased by the force of his irrestible eloquence.

Whitefield left Middleboro for Plymouth, and a great part of the congregation followed him. Their simple, trusting hearts were stirred to their depths by his fiery eloquence as the forest leaves are stirred and driven before the autumn blast.

There is a tradition, related by descendants of Madam Morton[2] that has reference to the preaching of Whitefield. It is this:

She arose early one Sabbath morning in 1746 and said to one of her sons, "Prepare me the horse and chair (a light carriage so called in those days), I must ride down to Plymouth today."

He replied, "Mother, why do you go to Plymouth today? Do you not know it is Sabbath morning?"

She answered, "I know it is Sabbath morning. I am going to Plymouth to hear Whitefield preach. He is to be there today. It was so revealed to me last night in a vision passing before my eyes. I saw him ascend the pulpit of the meeting house in Plymouth. He preached with terrible power. A great crowd was present. Hundreds were converted. The words of his text is still ringing in my ears. 'Behold, he shall come in the clouds, and every eye shall see Him.' My son it was no idle dream! It was a revelation to me from God. Prepare me the chair. I must ridge down to Plymouth today."

The son did as his mother commanded. She went to Plymouth; Whitefield occupied the pulpit of the meeting house. He preached with startling power and energy. It was the beginning of a great awakening. Multitudes were converted by his preaching. The words of his text were what the good woman had rung, with so much emphasis, into the ears of her son.

Are there not many such well authenticated instances on record in the lives of good men and women, showing how closely is the world in which we live linked to the spiritual one just beyond us? and how we are constantly watched over by heavenly Intelligence in every step of our mortal pilgrimage?

The old mansion in which the great preacher stopped in Middleboro was consumed by fire during the winter of 1780. It had been standing for nearly a century. Tradition says that [illegible] fire originated through the carelessness of Calliminco, the successor of the slave, Sambo, who had placed a wooden vessel filled with ashes containing coals of fire in an outhouse adjoining the main dwelling. In a few hours the whole building was in flames. The people ran to try to save it; but with but few means to help themselves — the streams all ice bound — for it was the dead of winter, all their efforts were in vain. In their utter helplessness, it is said than many women present knelt down on the cold snows and prayed for help to Him from whom only help could come. It was a sad sight, and one that brought tears into the eyes of many who witnessed it, to see the venerable pile rapidly vanishing before their eyes, and they helpless to save. They watched to see it go down — the tall gables and the antique roof all went down together, and with them perished every vestige of the old house of the pastor they had loved so well. For the period of thirty-five years he had occupied the old dwelling; he had seen his family of ten children grow up around him there; the old inhabitants had often met his smile of welcome at its threshold; and over that threshold, thirty-six years before, one early spring morning they had conveyed him to his last resting place in the tomb on the Green.

Madam Thatcher did not live to see her home made desolate by fire. She had passed away nine years before, and had been laid beside her husband in the house he had prepared for them both and their children after them. The others sleep in foreign graves, far away from the old ancestral burying place.

The parsonage, built by Rev. Mr. Conant, and owned by him was erected in 1752. It is the same now standing, the property of Mr. James Sparrow. Mr. Conant and Mr. Barker occupied it during the whole of their ministry. It was considered a fine looking edifice in its day; and is even now a good looking structure of the olden time; and might if properly cared for, withstand the storms of another century, with its firm, massive frame and strong timbers, bound together with braces of solid oak.[3]

### *Rev. Peter Thatcher*

According to tradition, this good minister was a man of strong religious convictions, great energy of purpose, and a very rigid disciplinarian. He was both loved and feared by the people of his parish. They reverenced his opinion. To say that, "Mr. Thatcher said so," was enough to settle the fiercest controversy. His christianity was agressive, yet kind and forebearing. He had great reverence for the ministerial office. In this he reminds us of the late Dr. Emmons of the town of Franklin, Mass., of whom it is said that he always expected the students of divinity in his family to arise and do him reverence whenever he entered their presence. Mr. Thatcher was orderly and punctual in all his engagements; his punctuality descended into the most common affairs of his life. In this too, he reminds us of Dr. Emmons, of whom the following story is told:

He had been accustomed during the whole of his ministry to receive his yearly salary on the last day of the year, at a certain hour, and was always to be found seated in the study at that hour, ready to receive the church officer with the money. A new officer had been chosen who knew not this; or, if he did, thought the good pastor might as well call, for once, and receive the money from him at his own dwelling. He therefore kept the money lying on the table in his front hall, waiting for the minister to come and receive it. One, two, three days passed, and no minister appeared. At length, on the fourth day, he heard a loud knocking at the door. He opened it, and Dr. Emmons stood before him. "Sir," said he, "I have been sitting in my study, waiting for you precisely at three o'clock, every day this week. You have not come yet. Good morning, sir!" and he turned and left, with the money lying in full sight ready for him, on the table in the hall. The church officer, finding that the good minister would rather starve than break through a time-honored custom, went the next day, and took him the money.

Whether Rev. Mr. Thatcher would have carried his ideas of punctuality and order thus far, we know not; but we know that he would not bear the least infringement on his ideas of order, either in himself or others.

### *Madam Thatcher*

Madam Thatcher was a woman of marked ability and, like her husband, possessed great energy of purpose. She was a descendant of the Prince family — one of the most ancient and honorable in Boston. She brought with her to Middleboro many of the traits that distinguished that family, especially their philanthropy and strong religious convictions. She was a woman abounding in charity and, with Madam Morton as her companion, they went forth on their messages of mercy among the families that lived among the byways and narrow wood paths on the outskirts of the old town, dispensing charity to the poor and afflicted among them. Heart to heart, and hand to hand, they went on their errands of mercy causing the poor to rejoice and sad hearts to sing for joy. Many traditions repeating their deeds of goodness, have come down to us after four generations.

There is a tradition extant of Madam Thatcher's strict family economy, bordering on parsimony. I think it does the good woman great injustice. The following is the one that comes the most directly to us, and must, therefore, be nearest the truth. It was related by one who knew her personally and related it to her grandchildren, who are still remembered by some now living among us.

### *The Story of the Buried Turkey*

Sambo, the slave boy, had one day killed a turkey by throwing a stone at it, and, as he did not wish to have his mistress discover it, he buried it behind the barn. The next day some workmen were expected to finish an out building and his mistress said to him, "Sambo, today we are to have workmen to dinner and we have no meat. Run and kill a turkey, and dress and roast it for dinner for the workmen. You will have to wait upon them as I am called away and shall not return until evening." Sambo, instead of killing a turkey, went and dug up the one he had killed with the stone, and dressed it for the men's dinner. He hoped that as only one turkey would be missing, in this way he could deceive his mistress. At the dinner table he said to the head workman, "My Missy always has grace said at the table. Will you say grace?" The workman, to whom Sambo's act had been made known and who was quite a wit and fond of extemporizing in poetry, said, "No, Sambo, I shall not say grace; but I will write something and leave it on my plate after dinner and you can give it to your mistress to read." He did as he had said and Sambo, all unwittingly, gave the paper to his mistress upon her reurn. The lines are as follows:

Oh, Lord of love,
Look from above
    Upon this turkey hen,
That once was dead,
And buried,
    And now has rose again.

Of course an explanation had to be made. Sambo's fault was discovered, very much to the poor slave's shame and disgrace.

*Sambo.*

The story of Sambo has been before told in the columns of this paper. He was a slave, lately brought from Africa, and could not speak a word of English when he was received into Mr. Thatcher's family. Seeing the oven heated on the day of his arrival, he thought that he was going to be roasted alive, and fled into the woods where he remained for several days without food or drink. At last he was discovered and brought back. He grew up a smart and very intelligent negro. He became the baker of the family which had no other servant and when, one day, he saw his large loaves of brown bread fall from the crust owing to his oven not being sufficiently heated, Sambo seated himself on the loaves to keep the crust down, believing that the Evil One was pushing it up from the other side.

Sambo became quite religious in his after years, and used to appear at the old Meeting House, sitting in the slave's pew in the gallery, dressed in his best and carrying in his hand a very gay pocket handkerchief, a present from his kind mistress. He would flourish it, and sometimes make it approach his face as if very much affected by his master's sermons. But the other slaves thought that this was all put on and that Sambo only wanted to show his red handkerchief. Envy and jealousy had not in those days all fled from the volatile African race.

Sambo went to Plymouth on foot to hear "Massa Whitefield" preach as he was expected there on a certain day. But the people were all disappointed. Whitefield did not come and Mr. Wheellock, an itinerant minister, preached in his place. Sambo was very much affected. He cried, and fairly howled so as to attract the attention of the whole congregation. One of the deacons of the church went to him and asked him to be still or he would have to leave the meeting house. "I cannot be still," said Sambo. "Massa Whitefield preach so, he almost break my heart." "But it is not Whitefield that is preaching," said the deacon. "It is Mr. Wheellock!" "Mr. Wheellock?? Mr. Wheellock?" exclaimed Sambo. "Then I have made all this great hubbuboo for nothing!"

More about old houses in Middleboro in the next issue.

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1. George Whitefield, noted evangelist, born in England 1714, died 1770.
2. Wife of Ebenezer Morton, who lived in the old Morton house then located on South Main Street near the present Prospect Street.
3. This house was demolished when the new Route 44 was built. It stood well to the north of the present First Congregational Church.

## A NICE PLACE TO VISIT

The Captain Bangs Hallett House in Yarmouth Port, Cape Cod, is a must if one is interested in things historical. The lovely old house was the home of Anna and Bangs Hallett. Mr. Hallett was a sea captain who of necessity spent much time away from home. His wife Anna went with him just once and her trunk that went with her stands at the foot of her bed.

The original house was built in 1740. In 1840 Captain Bangs decided to build a new home. He liked the site of the old house so he cut off what he did not want to use and had it moved away, keeping for Anna's use the basement kitchen, the sitting room above it and a small attic bedroom above that. The house is built in the style known as Greek Revival and, with its many large, spacious rooms indicates the owner was a man of substance.

The house appears as if lived in, each room furnished with beautiful period furniture, including a delightful children's room on the second floor. Hugh D. Clark, the Executive Director of the museum, is a most cordial host. The museum, sponsored by the Yarmouth Historical Society, is open year round, Monday through Saturday, 2-5 P.M.; adults 50 cents, children under 12, free. The Society also invites visitors to enjoy their botanic trails to be found in their fifty acres of Cape Cod beauty.

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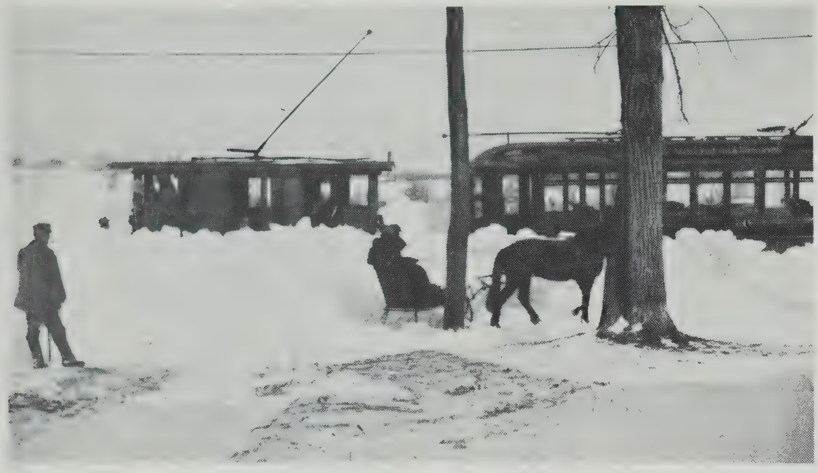

Barden Hill in the snowstorm of January 16, 1910

Middleboro has experienced its share of severe snowstorms in years gone by. Who will ever forget the Valentine Blizzard of February 14, 1940? By afternoon of that day drifts were piled eight feet high.

In March, 1956, the town suffered twin blizzards within a span of three days. On Friday, March 16th, the village was buried in snow with winds reaching a velocity of 80 miles an hour. On the following Monday morning, eighteen inches of snow fell to add to the eleven inches of Friday's storm.

The accompanying pictures show still another storm of the variety that seems to have been more common in the days of our childhood.

Another view of the same storm

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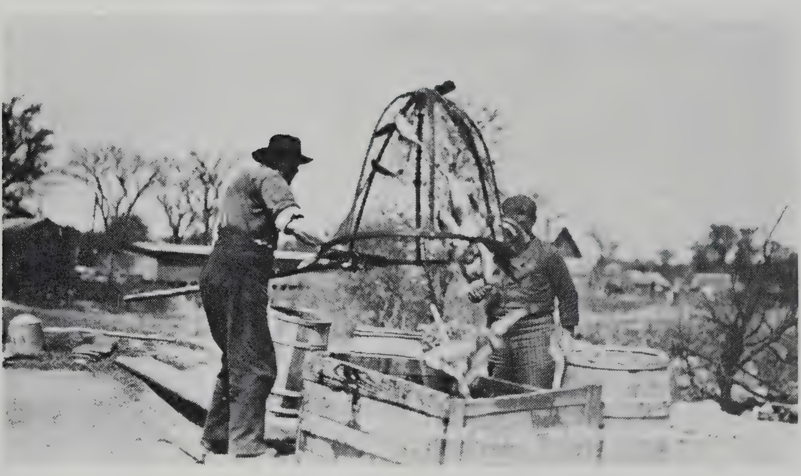

**Middleboro Herring Run, Star Mill**
**1910**

## SPRING TIME IS HERRING TIME

Like almost everything else, herring time in Middleboro has experienced a drastic change. The accompanying photograph depicts the seining of herring as it was done in the early 1900's when herring were so thick as they battled their way up the Nemasket River to spawn in Lake Assawampsett, that it was often remarked, "you could walk across the river on the backs of the herring." The picture was taken in 1910 when the herring harvest was at its peak. The herring run at Star Mill was said to be the largest in the world. Bids for the privilege of taking the herring were made by firms that manufactured fertilizer and cat food. One year the bid reached a top price of $8,600. Because the river and the greater part of Lake Assawampsett are in the town of Lakeville, that town was awarded a part of the bid, a sum based upon the proportion of ratable polls in Lakeville to ratable polls in Middleboro.

The primitive method of seining herring shown in the photograph gave way to machinery and the highest bidder would appear at the herring run with great trucks equipped with mechanized seins which would scoop up fish by the thousands.

In 1944, the run of herring diminished. As the finny creatures made their way from Mt. Hope Bay into the Taunton River, thence to the Nemasket River in North Middleboro, through the fishways to the lake, pollution and disease took their toll. Never again were the herring seen in the vast numbers that every spring attracted great crowds of sightseers.

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## THE OLD TRAINING GREEN

George Ward Stetson

*The author is descended from the first Stetson (Robert) who came to America in 1634 and settled in Scituate, Massachusetts. Robert served as "Cornet of the Troop of Horse" in King Phillip's War. From the "Cornet" down through the Revolution and War of 1812, to his own son who served in the Korean War, Mr. Stetson's forbears were military men. He served in World War II from private to Major in the Militia of Massachusetts. For several years he served in the House of Representatives at the State House in Boston.*

## THE OLD "TRAINING GREEN"

George Ward Stetson

There is no more beautiful scene in all America than an old New England village nestling peacefully in its lush hills and valleys. This picture has for years beckoned artists and photographers hoping to capture its beauty. The focal point of such a scene would be "the Green" around which are clustered the white pillared colonial church, the town hall, country store and the solidly constructed and imposing homes. Even today in a rapidly changing era, this spot of refuge and charm is often called the old Training Green, Village Green, the Common, the Muster Field or just the Green.

In the earliest days of our colonies "the Training Green" was established through sheer necessity. Because of the common need for a suitable tract of land upon which their militia might train for the defense of their homes, folks willingly conveyed ground for the training of the military company.

Under date of September 1, 1640 in the old Plymouth Colony Law (English Law) it is recorded "that the Inhabits of every Towne within the Government fitt and able to bear arms be trayned (at least) six tymes in the year." The Colony Court ordered each military company to choose its own officers. These officers chose the field officers, the Majors, Lt. Colonels and Colonels, — who in turn chose the Generals. This system accounts for the many military titles often used by our grandparents. If below strength, a company was commanded by a Lieutenant or Ensign. At the outbreak of King Phillip's War the town of Middleboro, for example, had a company of but sixteen men and the Governor gave John Thompson the commanding officer and Ensign's commission and later a Lieutenant's commission. This old town had but one company for fifty-eight years.

While Massachusetts remained as a colony of England, all military commissions expired at the death of the reigning sovereign, to be renewed upon the ascension to the throne of the new monarch. The towns were divided into military districts, based upon population. Middleboro had four military districts at the outbreak of the Revolution, — hence four companies, each with a Captain and two Lieutenants. These four companies formed a battalion, commanded by a Major.

With the growth of our communities it was necessary to provide sufficient Training Greens, resulting in some towns having four or five, based upon the distribution of population. Since all "able bodied" men formed the militia and many served as officers, it is not difficult to appreciate the power and influence which the military wielded in New England. In a letter to a friend written just prior to his death in 1826 John Adams wrote, " The American States have owed their existence to the militia for two hundred years. Neither school nor town meetings have been more essential to the formation and character of the nation than the militia."

By Act of the Continental Congress on July 18, 1775 it was provided, "that all able bodied effective men between sixteen and fifty in each colony should form themselves into regular companies of militia," — all units subject to the Governor's call. It suggested that one fourth of these should be "Minute Men." The whole state under this law was organized as companies of "Train Band", — while including citizens from fifty to sixty-five under the "Alarm List." Equipment required to be furnished by and for each man, was a good firearm, bayonet, ram rod, cartridge box for fifteen rounds, six flints, one pound of powder, forty leaden bullets, haversack, blanket and canteen to hold one quart.

At the close of the Revolution that great Prussion officer General Baron Von Steuben assisted President George Washington in drawing up a new and nearly perfect militia system that became the basis of our present National Guard program. What schoolboy of bygone days can not recall how Von Steuben whipped the raw troops into a well-knit fighting machine during that terrible winter at Valley Forge.

If the writer may be permitted a personal observation, he would recall that at the outbreak of World War II when in the House of Representatives, he was privileged to serve on the Committee of Military Affairs. While working on the federalization of the National Guard and organization of the State Guard, as a Committee member, he observed how careful both federal and state military men were to refrain from altering the old militia law, — recognizing the perfection which Von Steuben had woven into the statute so many years ago.

With the need for and the growth of the militia, it is not difficult to visualize the part Muster Fields or Training Greens played in the picture. Regular and informal drills were frequently held, but we recall with much pleasure the stories of "Muster Day" and "May Training." On these days the local company or battalion would exhibit their prowess as soldiers, — dressed in gay white and scarlet trimmed uniforms, or the blue and buff of the Revolutionary period, and led by the fife and drum as featured in each company.

The "General Muster" was invariably held in October, usually lasting for two or three days and often held on the Green nearest the home of the Brigadier General commanding, — for this was a Brigade Muster made up of the several regiments from this section of southeastern Massachusetts. As

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Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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Training Green, Plympton, Mass.
A portion of the Training Green, showing in the background a boulder bearing a tablet dedicated to Deborah Sampson born in Plympton and famous for her participation in the Revolutionary War.

the troops approached the Training Green, — many coming from far distant points, they sometimes found obstructions placed in their way by youngsters of the town as pranks. Then detachments of "pioneer militia", — who always preceded a column, would clear the road. These men were dressed as woodsmen but wore the distinctive designation of their military unit. Once all were assembled there was considerable intricate infantry, artillery or cavalry drill by the various units of the Brigade. Drill was followed by sham battles, interspersed with martial music by the combined fife and drum units and it can be well-imagined there was plenty of horseplay on the part of the enlisted men. Food and drink was plentiful, — as the women of the town had been cooking and preparing for the Muster for days. They had also aided their men in "sprucing up" their showy but impractical uniforms. The militiamen themselves had spent much time in polishing their firearms, bayonets and metalwork, as well as shining up all leather goods for the inspection that concluded the Muster and was to be witnessed by high ranking civil and military authorities.

Although with the obvious weaknesses of the system in the very early days of the nation, it nourished and kept active a genuine spirit of patriotism. It also developed some officers and men who, — when stress did come under serious training and actual combat, — became fighting men of whom their fellow citizens had reason to be mighty proud. This was the type of organization which opposed the highly trained British regulars and Royal marines. Obviously the British, tired and bored from long confinement during the voyage across the Atlantic, looked upon an invasion of our shores and contact with the militia in the way of a "lark." They probably had little fear of, nor respect for, the capabilities of our troops.

A brief picture of the military situation as it existed here in southeastern Massachusetts at the outbreak of the Revolution might be in order at this point. The powerful British fleet was constantly patrolling our shores. Nantucket Island was completely in the hands of the English. The officers apparently had orders not to bring on any general engagement but to continually harass the shore towns, to land foraging parties for food and military necessities and to keep us in a state of concern and uncertainty. They were to make feints toward landing numbers of troops, but upon the approach of the militia were to retire to shipboard and put out to sea.

Although the militia was kept in readiness for possible service, it was not mobilized until an emergency arose. The method of procedure more or less followed this pattern. A citizen along the coast would observe an unusual movement by the British vessels, — giving every indication of landing troops. He would then run through the woods or over one of the few poor cartpaths to the nearest militiaman with the intelligence. This soldier would in turn, run or ride (for there were no phones, walkie-talkies nor radios) to his company commander. The Captain would alert his superior officer in like manner, — at the same time requisitioning the "town fathers" for supplies for the mission, and immediately mobilizing his company of light infantry. By the time the company was on the way to the point of danger, — fully armed and equipped, — the British had either completed their mission or possibly had not even effected a landing.

At the outbreak of the War of 1812 this inefficient method of operation was completely altered. Strategic locations were carefully selected and pinpointed along our coastline by the authorities. Here forts and defenses were erected by the military to be manned by a company or battalion from towns in the area. These troops, fully armed and equipped, were stationed at these points for a week, two weeks or even a month and were readly to march at a moment's notice if an emergency arose. Upon completion of the tour of duty these units were usually relieved by outfits from their own regiment or brigade. In this way the coast was constantly defended and ready to repel any attempt at an invasion. Our section of New England was not without battles during the formative years of the nation. Many towns were completely destroyed during King Phillip's war which broke out in all its fury in 1675, with considerable loss of life and the accompanying horrors of warfare. During the two wars with our mother country England, the Training Greens were in constant use. The citizenry became very familiar with the sound of fife and drum and the marching feet of enemy troops, and some even experienced the destruction and fears of actual combat.

There was one British mission that brought the War of The Revolution very close to the doors of southeastern Massachusetts when on September 5, 1778 an armada of more than thirty-two British ships dropped anchor off Clark's Cove, New Bedford. This fleet had been "making-up" in New London and Stonington, Connecticut for some time and had been referred to by the natives there as "the New Lun'un Fleet." This expedition was commanded by Gen. Sir Charles Grey and was ordered by Gen. Sir Henry Clinton to proceed up the coast, — with New Bedford as the objective.

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What an awesome sight this scene must have presented to observers on shore as more than thirty-two stately sailing vessels made their way toward Buzzards Bay filled with four thousand of King George's finest scarlet clad regulars. The soldiers which embarked were the 1st Battalion Light Infantry, 1st Battalion Grenediers and the 33rd, 42nd, 46th and 64th regiments of British regulars. The purpose of the mission was to destroy the shipping and business of "Bedford" and to capture huge stores of military supplies, — field pieces, powder, shot and shell that the Massachusetts Train Artillery had cached there for an emergency some months before. It is of interest that the information or intelligence prompting the expedition had been secured by none other than Capt. John Andre (later *the* Major Andre) who was hung as a spy in the West Point expose in 1780. We recall that King George III caused a monument to be placed in Westminster Abbey attesting to the esteem with which his memory was revered in England.

Effecting a landing the troops burned more than seventy vessels in New Bedford harbor, burned or destroyed twenty business establishments, burned eleven private dwellings and captured the valuable military stores, — the main objective of the mission. Local authorities in reporting to the Legislature set the property loss at $500,000, — a sum of substantial proportions for those days.

Regaining their ships, the British crossed New Bedford harbor to Fairhaven on the other shore, landing a force that overran Fort Phoenix, — spiking the cannon, destroying the trunions and emplacements and appropriating all serviceable military stores. Fort Phoenix at that time was manned by a very small "housekeeping" unit which recognized the futility of contesting four thousand of the King's finest regulars, so they stubbornly retired. In questioning the lack of militia and Continental troops in New Bedford at this crucial time, it must be remembered that the British had been occupying Rhode Island for three long years and many of our local troops were helping to contest the enemy in that area.

After securing Fort Phoenix the enemy regrouped and penetrated inland for several miles to a point known as Lund's Corner. Here they met a force of from one hundred fifty to two hundred militiamen summoned from Wareham and Middleboro to aid in the fight. The company from Middleboro was commanded by Capt. Amos Washburn and the men from Wareham by Major (later General) Israel Fearing. Major Fearing assumed command of the brisk battle that followed, — when the aging and infirm commanding Colonel felt surrender or even flight might be advisable, because of the disparity in contesting forces. The Major, an excellent officer and masterful tactician succeeded in driving the enemy back to their vessels with his small but determined force. As might be anticipated, the British report of their losses through death, wounds and missing is much less than our eye witness and militia reports that are recorded. There was loss of life on both sides, — though few in number, with some wounded and many missing.

Once again aboard ship, the big fleet put across Buzzards Bay to the town of Falmouth on Cape Cod. That town was heavily shelled all day for having failed to comply with a British blockade edict, — destroying among other things a salt works and several ships. Hoisting sail the British force turned and headed across Vineyard Sound through Quickse's Hole to Holmes' Hole, — now Vineyard Haven on Martha's Vineyard island, where the fleet dropped anchor. General Grey in his official report to his superior Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, writes that he demanded of the islanders of Martha's Vineyard the arms of the militia, the public money, three hundred oxen and ten thousand sheep. The Island officials very reluctantly agreed to the harsh terms but, — because results were so slow to materialize, the General took hostages aboard his forty gun flagship "The Carysfort" and held them there until his demands were met. The General's report records several vessels burned, twenty-eight whale boats captured, a salt works destroyed and much salt confiscated. In his artillery report three hundred eighty-eight stand of muskets with bayonets, pouches, powder and lead were captured. Valuable foodstuffs taken were as so forcefully demanded, — the three hundred oxen and the ten thousand sheep.

After standing by for another few days until additional vessels arrived from Rhode Island upon which they could load their loot, the armada hoisted sail and made its way merrily down the coast to New London and Stonington, — thus completing what the British surely felt was a most successful mission, — for General Grey reported to his superior; "I hold myself much obliged to the commanding officers of Corp and to the troops in general for the alacrity with which every service was performed."

It should always be kept in mind that all through the Revolution and the War of 1812 many of our people remained loyal to England the mother country, — and understandably so. With the outbreak of war in 1812, we find that war very unpopular in this southeastern section of New England. The country was prospering, our commerce was good, towns were feeling their growth and aside from the impressment of our seamen by the British, — many felt that there was no call for hostilities. However, with the growing and powerful British fleet once again patrolling our shores, we find our Training Greens in constant use, with an expanding militia, — but now, officered by men who had gained their military knowledge the hard way during the trying days of the Revolution.

Although much of the action during the War of 1812 was devoted to the sea, there was one operation in this immediate area which called for the mobilization and hastening of the militia to a point of invasion. On June 13, 1814 the good citizens of Wareham learned that the Brig of War "Nimrod" was feeling its way up Buzzards Bay with the possibility of their town being its objective. On the day previous "Nimrod" had picked up a seaman named Samuel Besse on West Island forcibly compelling him to pilot the brigantine up the bay until she was sighted off Mattapoisett at about nine o'clock in the morning on the 13th. At ten o'clock she dropped anchor off Bird Island, promptly lowered and manned six barges, — taking formation two abreast. Each barge carried a large lateen sail, a swivel gun on her bow and was rowed by six oars.

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Now with a fair wind and strong tide the little convoy steered directly for Wareham, carrying two hundred Royal Marines. At this point Ebenezer Bourne who had been watching the maneuver, hurried by boat and on foot to the village to inform the Selectmen that invasion was imminent. The alarm was quickly spread throughout the village and riders were dispatched to nearby towns with requests for militia. The Selectmen ordered Major Barrows to gather as many men as possible, prepare all arms and ammunition and hasten to The Narrows to intercept the barges as they approached the wharf. A horseman was hurriedly dispatched to Agawam with orders to inform Capt. Fearing of the alarm and have him call out his men with all haste to the east side of The Narrows.

With muskets loaded the small body of men, gathered under Major Barrows and Capt. Fearing, were ready to stand off the approaching two hundred marines as they came up the river into the village. However, this little band of men was persuaded by two fellow citizens to withhold their fire, — saying that a treaty had been arranged with the enemy to spare private property.

Soon the British came up the channel, — set a white flag, went on to the lower wharf where they landed, paraded and were inspected. Now it developed that after all no treaty had been made, — as the same two citizens approached the commanding British officer under a white flag and proceeded to accomplish that purpose.

The British commanding officer then placed sentinels at strategic points above the village with orders to let no one pass from the town. It is fortunate that word of the invasion had been sent to neighboring towns prior to the landing. With the excitement generated by the landing of the British marines, news had spread like wild fire. One of the persons to hurry to the village was Barker Crocker of West Barnstable, riding into town on his spirited horse. He began pricking the mount with pins until it reached a high state of excitement, rearing and plunging. As Crocker foresaw, the commanding officer ordered him to dismount. This he did and the uniformed Briton had hardly placed his own feet in the stirrops when he found himself flat on his face in the dust, — causing great amusement to marines and spectators alike.

Because of this humiliation the treaty was set aside and the angry officer ordered his men to fire Cosgrove rockets into the cotton factory, setting it afire. With their swivel guns they shelled Parker Mills and burned several vessels that had put into Wareham harbor for safety. The marines looted stores and secured the arms of the militia hidden under the porch of Capt. Jeremiah Bumpus' home. Meanwhile the Captain's daughter Betsy had safely concealed the town records in the woods at the rear of the house. This home was also fired by a rocket but the flames were soon extinguished and it stands today, a house of great beauty.

As the looting continued the British officer received word that militia from several adjacent towns was hastening to the relief of Wareham. He then called in his sentinels, took twelve prominent citizens of the town as hostages, — hurriedly embarked with two of the hostages in each barge, and headed out through The Narrows into Buzzards Bay. As they moved slowly down river, Major Bourne's men wanted desperately to fire upon the British but were compelled to desist for fear of shooting their own friends and neighbors, — held as hostages in each boat. In this manner the invaders moved safely back to the "Nimrod", having dropped the hostages at Cromeset Point and pilot Besse at West Island. Besse, incidentally, was arrested and tried before a magistrate in New Bedford and was clearly acquitted of any crime against the nation.

Later on the "Nimrod" sailed into Buzzards Bay again. However, this time she ran aground off Marion and was forced to push her top tier of cannon from the deck in order to free herself. In recent years fishermen have fouled their gear in the cannon of the famous "Nimrod" of the War of 1812 days.

Of considerable interest to us today is the knowledge that Major General Nathaniel Goodwin of Plymouth was the commanding officer of the Fifth Division which included all militia in this area during the War of 1812. It is said he was none other than the "Cap'n Goodin' " whose name appears in that great martial music so often heard on our Training Greens during the early wars, — "Yankee Doodle." For as Captain Goodwin during the Revolution, he commanded a Plymouth company in Rhode Island. He now sleeps on Burial Hill in Plymouth among his Pilgrim ancestors.

In looking back on those stirring early days of our republic and as we think of the men, young and old, who participated in May Training and Muster Day, it is doubtful that they ever thought of themselves as heroes." It is my belief that they liked the thought of arraying themselves in the colorful uniforms of the period and enjoyed the pomp and ceremony of the drills. They liked the association and fraternity of like-minded men. Many it would seem, wanted the "feel" of being members of the same militia unit in which their fathers or older brothers had served. Probably actual combat was the most remote thought in the minds of most of them. However this we know as a certainty, that in the instances of emergency and stress, — when called upon to put their training to a test, they performed well, — so well in fact, that you and I are the direct beneficiaries of the country which they won for us. Behind their rough exteriors, for many lived close to the soil as farmers and artisans, I sense in my reading a deep love of home and a strong faith in God, — a faith inbred through their rugged colonial and Pilgrim ancestry.

With the coming of modern armories, rapid transportation, good roads and instantaneous communications there seems to be little place for nor need of our Training Greens. Thus passes into history a most colorful phase of our way of life in New England. With this passing I am convinced we are presented with a challenge to exert every effort to perpetuate, cherish and protect the memory of our Old Training Greens and their contribution to a glorious history.

# TWIGS & BRANCHES
# of
# Olde Middleborough
# in
# Plymouth County
# Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

Today with our modern roads, high-powered cars and even our restricted speed of a maximum of fifty-five (55) miles per hour . . distance means little to us. It is a common experience for many persons to travel hundreds of miles in a day's time. If we go by air the distance travelled becomes thousands of miles. Yet in the old days when a horse-drawn vehicle provided the maximum of speed, or back in the early colonial period when most travel was done on foot . . people got around.

A man from Massachusetts married a girl who lived in Vermont, or Maine or New York. Have you ever wondered how they happened to meet? More frequently, of course our ancestors married the girl or boy who lived next door. The old Yankee expression "shanks' mares" was just another way of saying the journey was made on foot or by walking.

Recently I saw in a genealogical magazine a copy of some marriage records performed by a Rev. Josiah Kingsbury during a period from August of 1866 through April of 1895. These are not particularly early records but they intrigued me because the places where the marriages were performed indicated that someone had moved around quite a bit.

Many New Hampshire and Vermont towns were mentioned and also Connecticut. Upon closer examination I discovered that some thirteen (13) of the marriages were performed in Middleboro, Massachusetts. Although the Rev. Kingsbury was not listed anywhere on this list, a check of several of the Vermont marriages had been made in the vital records office at Montpelier, Vermont. It showed on these Vermont records that a Rev. Josiah Kingsbury had performed the ceremonies. But nothing further was learned about him.

A truly capable and responsible genealogist (or ancestry detective as one person called me) never wants unidentified persons around and continues the search so as to establish the who, what, when, where and why.

I learned that the Rev. Josiah W. Kingsbury preached in Middleboro from 1889 - 1891 at the First Congregational Church or as it is frequently referred to . . the Church on the Green.

These entries are not included in the church records listed in Weston's "History of Middleboro" because they are too late (after 1850) and basically it is a catalogue of members' and not a list of marriages.

The Rev. Josiah Weare Kingsbury was born at Underhill, Vermont on the 2d of October 1838, the son of the Rev. Samuel and Mary (Badcock) Kingsbury. The Rev. Josiah studied at Princeton, New Jersey Theological Seminary and was ordained an evangelist. Shortly afterwards he was installed as pastor of the Congregational Church at Queechy, Vermont. On the 28th of June 1866 the installation ceremony took place. He married the 2d of October 1865 (evidently on his birthday) Mary H. Jackson of Tamworth, New Hampshire.

The surname Badcock is the older form of the present-day name Babcock. The Babcocks were numerous and before 1700 we find them located in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. The Kingsburys were located in several Massachusetts towns prior to 1700 and at this point it would be sheer speculation or guesswork to try to decide who were the grandparents of the Rev. Josiah Kingsbury.

In doing some research to identify the Rev. Josiah Kingsbury I learned that the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Four Corners had a Rev. A. W. Kingsbury as pastor for the years 1878 - 1879. One wonders if these men were any relation to one another . . either close kin or merely from the same Kingsbury ancestor.

It is not at all uncommon to find church records, that is, baptisms, marriages and deaths, missing from the archives of a particular church. Ministers have always changed churches frequently . . on their own initiative or the decision of the church membership if they were Congregationalists . . . or at the request or decision of the ruling body of the church district for other faiths. The ministers kept the records of the ceremonies they performed and thereby considered the records as personal property . . . not church property. Consequently a great many records have turned up missing.

An analysis of the names of these persons who were married while the Rev. Josiah Kingsbury was the minister of the First Church proved interesting. It indicated that the birthdates were in the 1860 circa. Some of the family names are still listed in the local telephone book . . . such as Morse, Moulton, Ryder, Atwood, Wrightington, Keyes, Fisher, Weston, Brown, Wood, Thomas, Hamilton, Mansfield to name some of them.

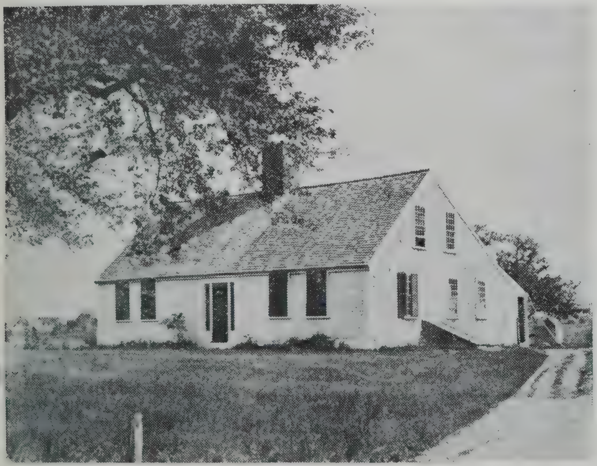
As so frequently happens the couples being married were not always natives or residents of Middleboro. A Bradford-Perkins marriage called both parties of Plympton. Also a Fenton-Gross marriage involved Plympton residents. One of the entries called the man 'drummer' to indicate his occupation. Today our young folks would associate this with a band or orchestra. But a far safer identification is to call him a salesman who went 'on the road' with his satchel or valise to 'drum up trade.' Yet we say it's the kids who talk in a language you can't understand.

## BARDEN HILLS

By Lyman Butler

Originally the area which we know as Barden Hill was Indian property. Until the early settlers began to make various purchases in different parts of the town, it extended along the high strip of land extending from a point near the new High School, northward along the Nemasket River and above what is now Fairview Street, across what was Water Street (now Barden Hill Road), included what we know today as Indian Hill (where the hand rock is) to what is now the Judge property. For many older residents it is quite easy to visualize this long ridge which was known as Indian Hill before Fairview Street was constructed and Water Street changed to Wareham Street to a point where Barden Hill Road starts now. As new roads were made, elevations were altered somewhat. Some high spots where good road material was found were made into gravel pits, while some low spots were filled. Many can remember when gravel was taken from a pit near the pumping station and also across the road on what is now C. P. Washburn property. Much of the material from here was used to cover the old town dump which was where Eugene's Restaurant is at present. Also there was a big pit near the present water tower on top of the hill. On the ridge in the rear of the home of Joseph Prinzo and the new Indian Hill Apartments, was an old Indian burying ground and some artifacts have been found in this area.

There are at least five Barden houses still in use and all are in good repair. The original William Barden house which is pictured here dates back to the mid 1600's, and though it had been neglected for many years, thanks to its present owners, the Richardsons, it is being renovated. Directly in front of this house, at the junction of Wareham Street and Barden Hill Road, is another Barden house occupied by Paul Malcolm and family. On Wareham Street next to the old Sisson farm is another well-kept Barden home, and a short way up Barden Hill Road is the home of G. Ward Stetson, who has kept this Barden house in very good repair. His workshop was originally a small shoe shop in the rear of J. Barden's house, now occupied by the Malcolms. Across the street from the Stetsons is another Barden house and though remodeled, is still an old Barden home. How many homes in the area may have been occupied by sons-in-law is not known. The last living descendant of the original Barden that lived in this house was William Barden who had a music shop and a furniture store in town in the 1930's first on South Main Street and later in the old Bon Mode building on Center Street. Mr. Barden's daughter Ruth married Howard Maxim.



The Old Barden House
Dates back to mid 1600's

"Barden Hills" was quite an appropriate name as you will realize when you read the following genealogy, but first let me quote from an article written by Lawrence Greene telling of some excavations made at Indian Hill by Ralph Nickerson and himself:

"This site lies on the eastern side of Nemasket River about an eighth of a mile from the famous wading place where the river was forded in Colonial days for lack of a bridge. This site is on the Barden farm and located very close to the Indian trail from Plymouth and near the historic Indian hand rock, on what is the Maddigan Farm now." Evidently the Barden holdings were extensive as the following genealogy will bear out.

### THE BARDEN-GAMMONS GENEALOGY

Compiled by Rebecca Raymond Seaver

William Barden, born in England in 1624, came to America in 1638. William married Deborah Barker, daughter of John Barker, Scituate, Mass. Deborah was one of the twenty founders of the First Church at the Green, Middleboro. William became part owner in nearly all purchases of land from the Indians. Twenty years after his death his estate was divided between his thirteen children.

For four generations numerous deed transactions went on, — recorded at the Registry of Deeds in, Plymouth, Mass.

The 26 Men's Purchase was the first purchase of land from the Indians. Another deed states the sale of "Big Cedar Swamp."

One transaction in 1777 was 64 acres to Luther Hall, price 90 pounds.

William was a carpenter and brick layer. His houses still stand on Barden Hill, Middleboro, — since mid -1600.

William and Deborah were Grandmother Raymond's first maternal ancestors in this country.

(We think of him as Middleboro's first real estate man since his life was land and houses. I am the 8th generation from them.)

Their son John married Mary Parlow on August 23, 1703 and their son Ichabod born December 18, 1705, married Bethia Ellems, May 10, 1736.

Ichabod and Bethia Barden had a son Rudolphus, born 1749, and he married Hannah Gurney on January 22, 1801.

Rudolphus and Hannah's daughter, Sally, born March 12, 1805, married Thomas Tillson Gammons on May 3, 1825.

Sally and Thomas Tillson Gammon's daughter Amanda, married William Davenport of Dorchester.

William and Amanda Davenport's daughter Harriet was born January 30, 1866. Harriet married Frank C. Raymond in Plymouth, Mass. on August 3, 1889. Frank died August 31, 1906. Harriet, Grandmother Raymond, died July 11, 1944. Frank and Harriet Raymond had five children, Earl, Millard, Alice, Frank, Rebecca.
Rebecca born April 30, 1900, married Ralph A. Seaver (born October 22, 1895) on June 30, 1920.

Rebecca and Ralph had two children, Ralph Adelbert Seaver Jr. born September 18, 1922, and Natalie Constance born February 27, 1926.

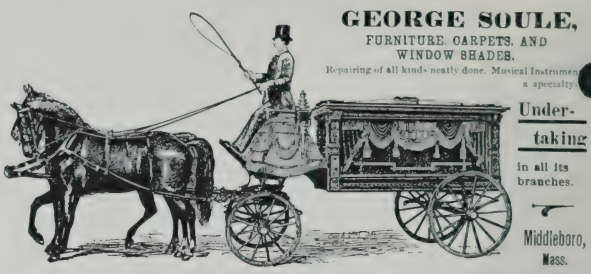
Ralph married Dorothy Wadsworth of Meridian, Mississippi on July 16, 1944. After the War they made their home in Atlanta, Georgia.

Natalie married George Lawton of Westport, Mass. on October 12, 1954 at Taunton, Mass.

Natalie and George had four children, — Deborah Louise, daughter of George Lawton and his first wife Elaine Smith, born July 3, 1950, Rebecca Lee, was born April 12, 1957, Pamela Sue on May 11, 1959, and Jennifer Anne, July 6, 1960.

Some recorded names of Indian witnesses on deeds—

Nathaniel Clark
Ephram Little
John Stephen



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## GEORGE SOULE

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In 1834, Mr. Soule moved the firm a few doors south on South Main Street, and added a line of factory-built furniture, going into Boston and bringing the furniture over the road with horse and wagon.

George Soule died in 1876, and the business was then conducted by his two sons, George Lewis and Charles W. Soule. In 1907, William L. Soule, grandson of the founder, purchased the business and continued as owner until his death in 1936. In 1937, the furniture department was bought by William Egger, and the undertaking business by Clarence H. Hayward.

## AN INDEX TO THE ANTIQUARIAN.

It is hoped the next issue of the Antiquarian will be an index to the first thirteen volumes of the magazine, covering the publication from its beginning in 1959 through Volume 13, 1972. Many members and subscribers have saved all the issues, but without an index, find it difficult to locate a particular article. This is especially true of the large libraries, museums and other historical societies that subscribe to the magazine and would like to use it as a source of historical information. With this issue, the Middleborough Public Library will have a complete file of the Antiquarian, and with the use of the index, will have an excellent source of Middleboro history.

## WITH REGRET

We find it necesary to increase the cost of the annual subscription to the Middleborough Antiquarian from two dollars to three dollars. This does not affect members of the Middleborough Historical Association as the Antiquarian is covered by the membership fee. The greatly increased cost of paper, postage and charges for printing has necessitated an increase in the subscription price.

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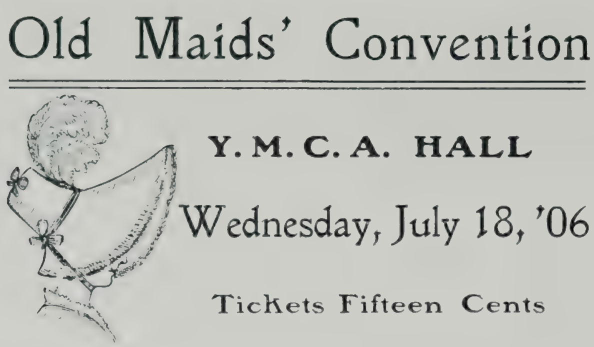

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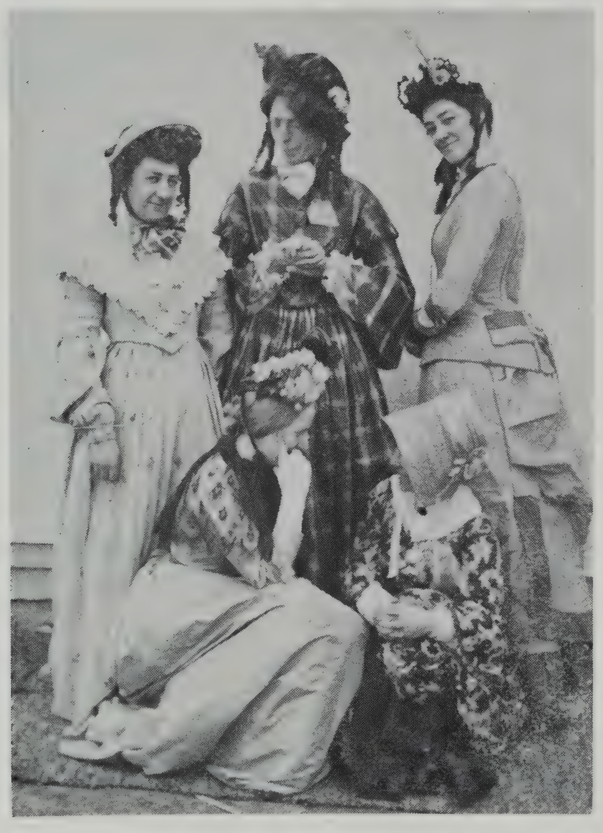

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Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XV 1974 Number 4
Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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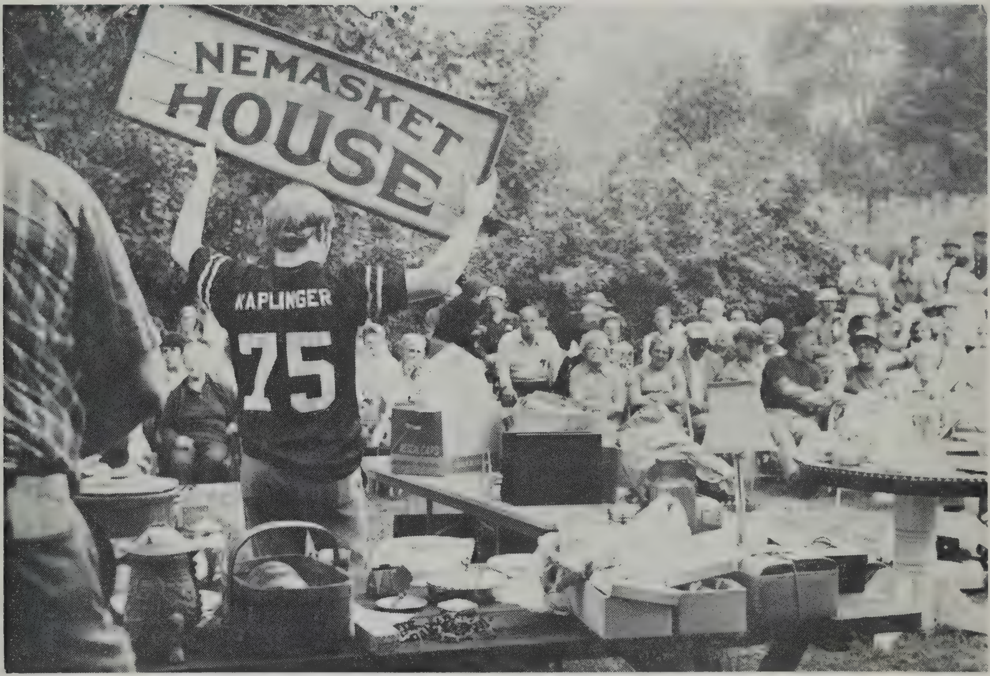

## THE AUCTION

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## SEPTEMBER 21, 1974

Lest some question the reason for selling a sign belonging to an old Middleboro hostelry, we hasten to explain that two signs were obtained by Mr. Romaine when the old hotel was demolished in 1939. One is displayed on a beam of the carriage shed at the Museum and it was decided by the Museum Committee there was no particular need to have two signs. The $25.00 the sign brought at auction can be very well used to help defray the expense of building the new blacksmith shop. It should be emphasized that it is the definite policy of the Museum Committee not to sell articles donated to the Museum.

Holder of the sign is Roger Kaplinger of North Middleboro who, with other young people of the community, gave valuable assistance before, during, and after the auction.

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The Flea Market
Museum Grounds Aug. 3, 1974
photo by Clint Clark

## THE AUCTION AND FLEA MARKET

The Flea Market came first, on August 3rd, carrying out the custom of several years of holding the sale on the first Saturday in August. Dealers came from all over Massachusetts and Rhode Island to engage concession space, many of whom had participated in every one of the Museum's Flea Markets. Some $700 was realized from this effort. In the background of the picture taken by Clint Clark can be seen the foundation of the new blacksmith shop under construction. As laid by Mr. Smalley, the foundation of flat stones is a work of art.

After an interim of more than ten years, the Museum staged a very successful auction on September 21st. Mr. and Mrs. A. Kingman Pratt very generously made their grounds available for the event. Members and friends of the Middleborough Historical Museum were generous with their donations of furniture, farm implements and bric-a-brac. Mark Hollander proved himself an excellent auctioneer, keeping the auction moving briskly and displaying a clever knack of coaxing the highest bids from members of the audience.

photo by Clint Clark
THE AUCTION
Mark Hollander, Auctioneer
A. Kingman Pratt Residence Sept. 21, 1974

Mrs. A. Kingman Pratt and Joseph Sinauski were co-chairmen of the auction and Mrs. Lyman Butler was in charge of the snack bar which was busy all day. Showers descended suddenly about two hours before the scheduled end of the auction, but the best offerings had been disposed of and the rain did not prove to be disastrous to the success of the sale. Approximately $2500 was grossed, much of which will be used to finance the new blacksmith shop.

## GIFTS

By bequest of the late Walter G. Eayrs, the Museum has received two very old and interesting paintings brought by Cephas Thompson, Middleboro's famous artist, from New Orleans in the early 1800's. One painting is entitled "The Orange Seller," the other "The Medicine Vender." These have been hung in the living room of the Museum, used as a reception center.

Mrs. J. Vincent Sullivan, before leaving town to make her home in Florida, presented the Museum with a large oil painting of her late father-in-law, Honorable John Vincent Sullivan. Judge Sullivan, a life long resident of Middleboro, was a justice in the Fourth District Court, 1942-1962.

An interesting momento of the Tom Thumbs has been donated by L. Charles Judge, a medal distributed at the time Tom Thumb was presented to Queen Victoria. On one side is the figure of General Tom Thumb with the words, "weight 16 lbs", on the reverse a likeness of Queen Victoria.

From time to time reminders of old Peirce Academy come to hand. Recently H. Judson Robinson of Segregansett brought to the Museum an autograph album containing signatures and verses of students attending the Academy in 1859. The little book gives evidence that pupils from far and near came to the Academy for their education.

The most recent gifts received are from the Gamache brothers who bought the bowling equipment at the former Y.M.C.A. building. In the room with the alleys were trophies won by Y.M.C.A. teams of former years, several of which were presented to the Museum. We are also indebted to the Gamache brothers for the sign, now displayed in the carriage shed at the Museum, from the old Aragon Hotel on Center Street, which the brothers purchased and converted into offices and apartments.

Mention with gratitude is made of the many shrubs and trees given to enhance the grounds of the Museum by Carl Weiler, a resident of Taunton and a member of the Middleborough Historical Association. Included were lilac and forsythia bushes, peach trees, a flowering crabapple, a rose bush and other handsome shrubs. It is a struggle to keep them in the ground because of the constant vandalism, but it is hoped there will be enough of them left by spring to add beauty to the grounds.

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XVI 1974 Number 1
Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

of

Olde Middleborough

in

Plymouth County

Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

In 1839 Middleborough was described as one of the largest townships in the state of Massachusetts . . . . . some fifteen (15) miles in length and an average width of some nine (9) miles. Figured in feet both the length and breadth of the town would be considered of quite impressive size. To a great extent Middleborough of today has pretty much the same boundaries and size. Since the residents of present-day Middleborough rely on automobiles for transportation the size of our town is seldom thought of. The distance of four (4) or five (5) miles from North Middleborough to the Four Corners is accomplished easily by car in ten (10) or fifteen (15) minutes. In 1839 the Middleborough residents relied on riding horseback or horse-drawn carriage or team. Those who had lesser amounts of the world's goods walked the distance and in those days four (4) miles was not considered a very great distance.

There was also the statement in the 1839 account that there were some indications of anthracite coal in the area. Presumably it was not found in abundance since we do not find any account of mining it. However the bog iron ore was found in several places and in particular at Assawompsett.

At this same time (1839) there were eight (8) houses of worship in the town of Middleborough . . four (4) were Baptist, three (3) were Congregational and one (1) was Methodist. Of course this was back in the days when Lakeville was still a part of Middleborough. One of the early ministers was Samuel Fuller. He was the son of Dr. Samuel Fuller, the physician or chirurgeon as he was called . . . the archaic word for surgeon. Dr. Samuel Fuller arrived as a Mayflower passenger. The Rev. Samuel Fuller, the first minister at the Green married Elizabeth Brewster, the daughter of another Mayflower passenger.

The earliest settlers in the town of Middleborough were principally from Plymouth some fourteen (14) or fifteen (15) miles distant. After the Indian Wars the settlers arrived here from other areas. As time went on people in Middleborough also left for other places such as towns in Rhode Island and eastern Connecticut. Travel by horseback and problably more frequently on foot was a way of life to these early settlers.

In 1890 Middleborough was described as an 'unusually level town' . . . an observation that is equally true today. Except for slight rises in the land such as White's Hill or Barden Hill . . Middleborough is a very flat area. At this period in the town's history, Middleborough was described as having 43,577 acres and of which 38,771 were taxed. The forest area, consisting principally of pines covered 19,352 acres. A county map of this 1890 date shows nineteen (19) swamps within the boundaries of Middleborough. One swamp in the southeast part of town was described as being some five (5) miles long and from one-half (½) to one (1) mile wide.

Tispaquin at this time was considered to be 260 acres in area while Wood's pond was only fifty (50) acres in size . . Indian names are very prevalent in this area as is easily recognized in the names of our ponds and rivers in particular.

In 1890 Middleborough had some 324 farms and the production from these farms amounted to $306,851. The soil was considered sandy and poor but the quality of the crops allowed Middleborough to get good value for the crops. Principal products at this time included apples, cranberries, strawberries, blueberries and huckleberries. A news item of the period stated that the Rocky Meadow cranberry bog in Middleborough produced a crop of 1,420 barrels of cranberries.

In 1885 several boot and shoe establishments were in existence and they employed 344 persons and a product value of $561,455. A straw goods factory employed some 150 persons and product worth $338,818. Wood products offered a total of $79,464 and metallic goods $51,400. The town of Middleborough in the 1885-1890 period had six (6) sawmills, four (4) wooden boxmills, nine (9) carriage factories, a woolen mill, a broom factory, a stone yard, a brick and tile yard, a tannery, a trunk and valise factory, three (3) printing offices. The co-operative bank was new and the savings bank had deposits to the amount of $613,059.

Middleborough in 1885 had 1,185 dwelling houses while in 1839 some fifty (50) houses were clustered around the Four Corners. Middleborough in 1885 had 5,163 inhabitants and 1,502 were legal voters . . . . and the tax rate was . . . . . $14.00 on $1,000. [Did I hear a groan or two?]

The primary, grammar and high schools occupied some thirty-two (32) buildings. The Eaton School also had 'good buildings.'

The Eaton School was managed by Amos Eaton under the name of the Eaton Family School until 1898. It appears to have been originally established about 1854 on Grove Street by S. W. Marston as a boarding school for boys. About 1859 Rev. Perez Lincoln Cushing took over the management of the school and upon the Rev. Cushing's death Mr. Amos H. Eaton became the head of the school and renamed it.

The 'News' . . a semi-weekly and the 'Gazette' a weekly were both being published in 1885 but the Gazette is the survivor. The church picture had changed very little . . there were now three Baptist churches, three Congregational and two were Methodist churches.

The town of Middleborough had attained something of a reputation for the longevity of its inhabitants. Luke Short who had died in 1746 was 116 years of age. In the 1885 census of Massachusetts (a state census not a Federal one) the town of Middleborough had 94 persons over 80 years, 11 who were over 90 years and one person who was 101 years.

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## NEMASKET FOOT BRIDGE

by LYMAN BUTLER

Though many of the older generation may remember when the foot bridge over Nemasket River was built, probably very few younger ones do. As told in the new history by Mertie Romaine, this bridge was built in 1919 for the convenience of people who wanted to go to Nemasket Hill Cemetery from town and had no car. From North Street opposite Pearl is what is known as Peirce Lane which runs down to the river in back of the Cemetery. The bridge was built by the Cemetery Association with the help of the Ladies Auxiliary called the Cemetery Circle. This bridge was a boon to walkers as it saved a couple of miles rather than to go around by the Green or Muttock. As autos became plentiful, the bridge was used less and less and fell into disrepair, finally becoming impassable. Then at the time of World War II when gas was scarce and many cars stayed in the garage, it was decided to rebuild the bridge since the cement abutments were still there.

Foot Bridge to Nemasket Hill Cemetery
ca 1940

A heavy timbered and planked structure with a steel pipe railing made a very strong bridge. A set of wooden steps made to ascend the hill from the first bridge were now deteriorated so a set of cement slab steps with solid steel stakes to hold them in place was built a bit to the west of he original steps, where the grade was less steep. These stairs are still in place, though the second bridge is completely gone. With the help of vandals and the elements, the wooden parts gradually disappeared, while a few pipes of the railing were salvaged.

The picture shown was taken in the winter of 1944 after the hurricane, showing the broken tree which was a victim of the blow. The group pictured here were employees of the Winthrop Atkins plant on Peirce Street who were thinking of starting a camera club. This was a favorite walk at any season.

## MOTOR REGULATIONS — 1902

On display in the carriage shed at the Middleborough Historical Museum is a large sign, the wording almost obliterated by age, with the following regulations for automobile and motor cycle drivers:

> Your attention is called to the Acts of 1902 Chapter 315 which provides
>
> 1st. That no such vehicles shall be run on the public highway outside the limits of the fire district or business part of this town at a greater speed than 15 miles per hour. Nor shall such vehicle be run on a public way within the limits of such fire district or business part of the town at a speed exceeding 10 miles per hour.
>
> 2d: Every person having control of such vehicle on a public street, when approaching any horse shall control such vehicle to prevent the frightening of such horse, and if such horse appears to be frightened the person operating such vehicle shall reduce its speed, and if the driver of such horse so requests it, such vehicle shall not proceed further toward such animal until such animal is under control by the driver.
>
> 3rd: Any person violating the above provisions, is liable to punishment by fine not exceeding $200, or by imprisonment for 10 days, or both such fine and imprisonment.
>
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> Selectmen

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Mr. Keyes was not the only one to provide conveyance to picnics, dances et cetera. The late Carlton W. Maxim of Maxim Motor Company also operated such a wagon, an automobile barge that took large groups on excursions, to out-of-town meetings and entertainments as far away as Boston.

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## TRADITIONS OF FAMOUS OLD HOUSES IN MIDDLEBORO

GRANVILLE TEMPLE SPROAT

From an old scrapbook

Continued from the previous issue

### *The Old Sproat House* (*Sproat Tavern*)

This famous old dwelling was built by Ebenezer Sproat on his removal from Scituate to Middleboro in 1703. There were two brothers of them — Ebenezer, who built the old Sproat house on the Green, and James who built a house at Ward Place — the cellar of which alone remains. The old house on the Green, when built, was only half as large as it now is, the northeasterly part being built first. It had two stories in front with a "lean-to" in the rear, an addition so called in those days, formed by making the roof extend so as to cover apartments in the rear on the ground.

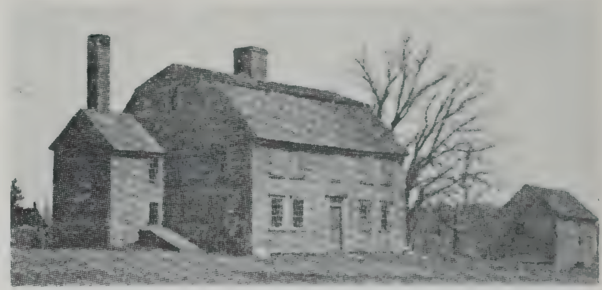
It was the only inn in central Middleboro for many years, and was famous in Revolutionary days as a rendevous for military men who found shelter beneath its hospitable roof. The town's people during the war, flocked there to enlist, and the spot is still shown where the liberty-pole once stood with its scale, showing the height of soldiers enlisting in the war.

The old house was a favorite stopping place for travellers from Plymouth on their way to the southeastern part of Massachusetts. Boston travellers also often called there and dined on their way through Middleboro and the surrounding towns.[1]

### *Colonel Ebenezer Sproat*

This distinguished officer of the Revolutionary army was born at the old house in 1755. Several anecdotes are related of him confirming the truth of the adage that "the child is father to the man;" the only one of which I will relate here:

It appears to have been his custom to gather all the boys in the neighborhood together, form companies, place himself at the head, go forth and storm the enemies' encampment which his youthful imagination had built; and return home, laden with the victor's spoils and singing war songs of triumph. Not far from his father's house was a large duck pond, the water of which was filled with broken ice, for it was in the dead of winter and all the rivers and streams were freezing cold. Young E. had only to imagine to himself the enemie's fort on the other side of the pond, and the pond the moat that separated him and his soldiers from the walls of the fort. The moat must be crossed, and the fort attacked. The boys had each a small hook and ladder in his hand for scaling the walls of the fort. They approached the shore of the pond. The commander spoke. "Soldiers, listen to the voice of your Captain. You see that fort on the other side of the moat. The draw-bridge is up. It is the enemy's camp. It is filled with French and Indian warriors. We must cross the moat and scale the walls of the fort. We must take it. We must put to the sword all who resist. We must prove ourselves true American soldiers. We must cover ouselves with glory. We must conquor or die. On, my brave soldiers, on! 'Tis your commander that calls." On he rushed and plunged into the icy waters, waist deep, the boys attempting to follow. At the first touch of the water, some of them began to shiver and turn back. Others followed, and but a few gained the opposite shore. The moat crossed, the fort was easily taken. They had only to load themselves with spoils and return, freezing and wet, but as your E. said, "covered with glory."



Old Sproat Tavern 1703-1848

Plymouth Street, East Middleboro.

Who will say, after a feat such as this, done by a boy, he was not ready to go forth when a man to brave the dangers of the western wilderness and be a pioneer in the wilds of Ohio? to fight hostile savages, destroy their forts, and found towns and cities where once the red men roamed, and the forests stretched themselves out, an unbroken solitude.

Colonel Sproat was called by the Indians Ahdik Oskinjegun, the Buck Eye, from his clear eagle-like eye and his stately bearing. From this name, given him by the red man, Ohio took its name of the Buck Eye state.

### *The Dinner of Herbs*

Sir Granville Temple used to stop at the old house on his visits to Mrs. Phebe Oliver at the old Morton House. He came, as was the custom with the Gentry of the day, with his coach and six, and driver and footman in full livery. He came one day and called for a dinner for himself and servants. He sat down to a frugal country dinner, consisting of meat and vegetables and a plain family pudding. Sir Granville, who had been accustomed all his days to the luxuries of Sir John Temple's sumptuous table, at the old Temple Mansion in Boston, expressed, on his return, great dissatisfaction for his homely country fare to some of his wealthy friends in Boston. One of them repeated to him in reply that passage from the Proverbs of Solomon; "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." Sir Granville said, "I know from recent experience what a dinner of herbs means, and it would take a good deal of hatred to make a dinner of fat, juicy, roast beef taste as poor as the dinner of herbs I have lately eaten in Middleboro."

### *A Rod for the Fool's Back*

The old house was once the witness to a scene that seems to us of modern days a little ludicrous and carries us back to the time when the church wielded temporal, as well as spiritual, power, and ministers took it into their hands to chastise their delinquent church members, with tough rods of hickory. Rev. Peter Thatcher, minister of the old church on the Green, had in his church a delinquent member by the name of Palmer with whom he had often laboured earnestly to bring into subjection to church rules and discipline, and to mend his ways which had become perverse and wicked. Among other crooked ways, he had that of tippling, and he often went to the old tavern to get his brains muddled and his bottle filled with pure, old New England rum. When the news came to the ears of the minister, he said, "It must not be!" I must put a stop to these ungodly proceedings. The backslider must be met, and his evil course be checked. Does not the Bible say, 'Smite the scorner, and withold not the rod from the wicked?' I will meet this bad man, and smite him lest he fall and rise no more."

So he armed himself with a stout hickory cane and went, on a night when he knew the backslider would visit the tavern, and stationed himself outside, by the door. Soon he heard the staggering backslider approach the door, open it, close it behind him, and come out into the darkness. Now was the time for the good minister to enforce his counsel with strokes that could be felt. He laid on such blows to the delinquent's back that he squirmed, gave a howl, and ran for life, the minister following him with blow after blow. Whether he repented after this, and turned from his evil ways, Tradition has left no record. But, doubtless, he always looked sharply around him afterward when he went to go out at that door by night, and never forgot the drubbing that he got from the good minister inspired by that scripture, "A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back."

### *The Old House in Later Days*

We will now come down to the days of the writer of these sketches. The old inn was the place of congregation for the people who used to assemble at the old Meeting House for worship in the cold days of winter. In those days the old Meeting House was destitute of any means for warming; men sat in their cloaks and overcoats and women in their shawls and muffs, carrying a little hand stove to keep their feet from freezing. At noon intermission, they flocked to the old inn to enjoy the comfort of its big, roaring fires and sit in its warm, ample kitchen till the time for afternoon service. Some of the best thinkers among the men in the parish were there, and often their conversation was spirited and exceedingly instructive, as it reached the listening ears of us youngsters who crowded into the window seats and back chairs of the room. Zachariah Eddy was generally chief speaker, and we shall never forget some of his pithy sayings and wise practical remarks, as we heard them uttered by him in those youthful days.

A very deep well at the southwest end of the building, with clear crystal water, used to supply us young ones with drink during the hot summer months when we attended meeting at the old Meeting House. Very cool and very refreshing it was, as the water dripped from the old oaken bucket and fell sparkling and splashing on to the mossy stones below.

A large gilt ball hung for a sign on a post near the well.

### *The Great Hurricane of* 1815

The writer well remembers the Great Hurricane of 1815. Nearly all the families in the vicinity of Court End were gathered into the house of Judge Wilkes Wood. They had gone there for safety, as the houses in the neighborhood were high and trembled and rocked to their foundation. We urchins were collected in a long, narrow entry in the rear of the building. We were engaged, boy fashion, in playing "Blind Man's Bluff," unmindful of the gale which we could not h[illegible] in our back retreat. Presently, a terrific gust of wind tore o[illegible] the woodshed and outhouse, connected with the entry where we were assembled, and they went crashing to the ground. The noise of the falling buildings brought our mothers to the spot, who quickly hustled us into the main building.

The writer remembers looking out and seeing the heavens dark with floating hay from a barn, the roof of which had been carried away by the violence of the wind.

The large front door of the house was forced open, and the women could not shut it; men had to come with planks to secure it. The roof of the old Morton house, opposite, could be seen surging and swinging in the blast, but its firm oaken timbers did not give way; they stood strong to the end of the gale. A large apple tree, torn up by the roots in an adjacent orchard, was rolled through the streets as though it had been drawn by oxen, much to the terror of the women in the house. They feared lest it would be dashed by the wind against the walls of the building and crush them in. Much was the joy expressed when the violence of the gale abated, and we could return again to our own homes and find them still standing, having braved the fury of the hurricane.

And how did the old house on the Green stand the force of the gale, on that memorable day in the autumn of 1815? It shook and trembled to its foundations, but they could not be moved, for it was built of strong oak timbers, well braced and pinned together. Only windows and doors had to [illegible] carefully watched and guarded as they bent and swayed before the force of the wind.

The old Meeting House nearby suffered the most. Some of its windows were found, after the gale, in a swamp far to the rear of the building. They had been carried thus far and left hanging among the trees, the glass gone; only the massive old sashes remained.

The old Meeting House had stood through a thousand storms, but none as violent as this. And I think the old house on the Green, could it but speak, would say the same also.

An old dwelling could tell of other things than these; things that would carry us back to the days when our fathers lived and their fathers before them, the ancient pioneers of the old historic town. It could tell of the guests who have assembled within its walls; of the scenes witnessed there in the old Revolutionary days; how it heard the distant roar of old Bunker's bloody fight, filling with terror and dismay the hearts of mothers, wives and daughters who had husbands and sons and brothers on the field of battle, "Fighting for Freedom in Freedom's holy war." It could speak of all the changes it has passed through during the years it has been standing on that spot, overlooking the home of the dead; of the great multitude who have been borne to their last resting place, almost beneath its walls; of the bands of mourners departing with broken hearts, leaving their dead behind them. It co[illegible] tell of light and darkness, joy and sorrow, life and death, fo[illegible] this is the whole history of man.

G. T. S.

---

1. The Sproat Tavern was torn down in 1898. Across Plymouth Street still stands the Sproat Tavern barn, on the property of the late Frederick S. Weston. The Sproat Tavern outhouse is on the grounds of the Middleborough Historical Museum.

*To be continued*

## THE PEMBERTON CHAIR

In the Middleborough Historical Museum, standing before the secretary where visitors register, is a very handsome chair, a country Chippendale, known as "The Pemberton Chair." This chair was presented to the Museum by Dr. Franklin P. Lowry of Newton. It was originally owned by the Scolley Family for whom Scolley Square in Boston was named. William Scolley, Son of John who came to Boston from the Orkney Islands in 1700, was Dr. Franklin's great-great-grandfather.

There were two Rebecca Scolleys — aunt and niece. The niece, pictured here, was born Rebecca Jaycox, daughter of Thomas and Susannah (Scolley) Jaycox. She was adopted by John Scolley and brought to Middleboro in 1744 by her Aunt Rebecca Scolley at the time of the siege of Boston. They stayed at the Dr. Peter Oliver house in the Muttock section of the town. At a ball given there Dr. Joseph Clark met the niece Rebecca, and married her. They lived in a house Dr. Clark built on South Main Street, Middleboro, near the railroad bridge, in later years occupied by the Dorrance family and torn down when Route 25 was constructed.

Dr. Lowry also presented the Museum with a painting by Cephas Thompson of "Grandmother Sproat," Dr. Lowry's grandmother. Lucy Morton Sproat married Amos Pratt. The portrait, painted in 1843, was presented to Granville T. Sproat, later was given to J. R. Sproat, and then to Dr. Lowry.

Grandmother Sproat was born in 1780, died in 1849. Amos Pratt owned a thread mill in Furnace Village, Easton, Massachusetts, and both he and his wife are buried in an old South Easton cemetery.

The Pemberton chair was given to the aunt, Rebecca, by the Earl of Pemberton who came to Boston from England but, she refused to marry him because he was accustomed to have wine on his table. When he died, he left the chair to Rebecca who in turn left it to her niece Rebecca, wife of Dr. Clark.

Dr. Clark was a surgeon in the Revolutionary War. Their daughter, Lucy, married James Sproat and their daughter, Lucy Morton Sproat, married Amos Pratt. Mrs. Pratt eventually became the owner of the chair and left it to her niece, a great-great-great niece of Rebecca Scolley.

"I send you this picture of your Great Grandmother Rebecca Clark. She was born in Edenton, N. C. 1757. At the death of her mother, her father took her and a little sister to Boston (not wanting to have them brought up with slaves) to their Uncle John Scolley's. In 1774 when Boston was evacuated by the British, her Aunt Rebecca Scolley (for whom she was named) took her to Middleboro, where she became acquainted with Dr. Joseph Clark, and was married to him in 1779. She died in Middleboro, 1831. She was daughter of Thomas Jaycox and Susannah Scolley.

This photograph was taken by Copley in Boston when she was seven years old, and copied in Middleboro by George Putnam in 1884."

Lucy M. Pratt.

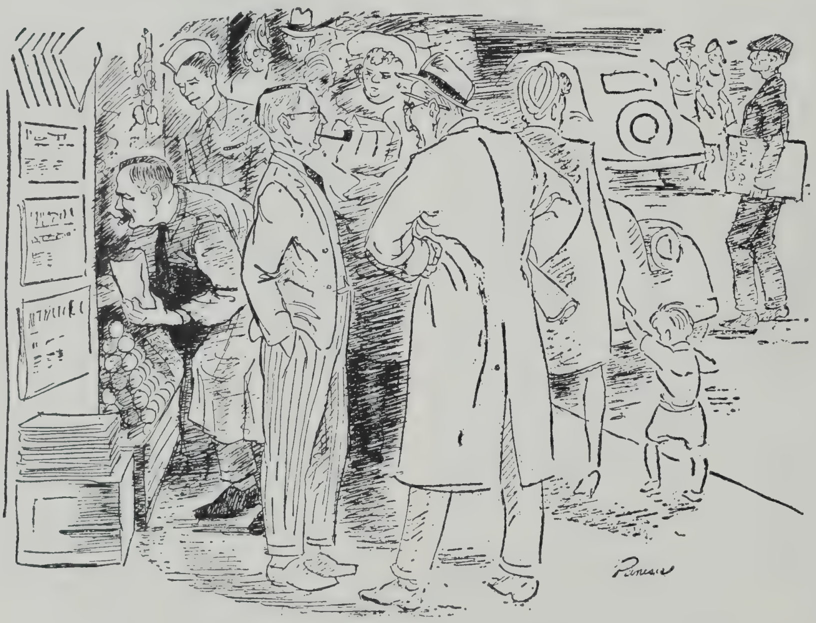
## CHANGING ORDERS IRK MIDDLEBORO IF WASHINGTON COULD HOLD TO DECISIONS PEOPLE WOULD BE MORE SATISFIED

The above is the heading of one of a series of articles and cartoons that appeared in the Boston Traveler in 1943. The articles were written by one "Andrew Tully" and the cartoons were drawn by a young local artist, Nicholas Panesis.

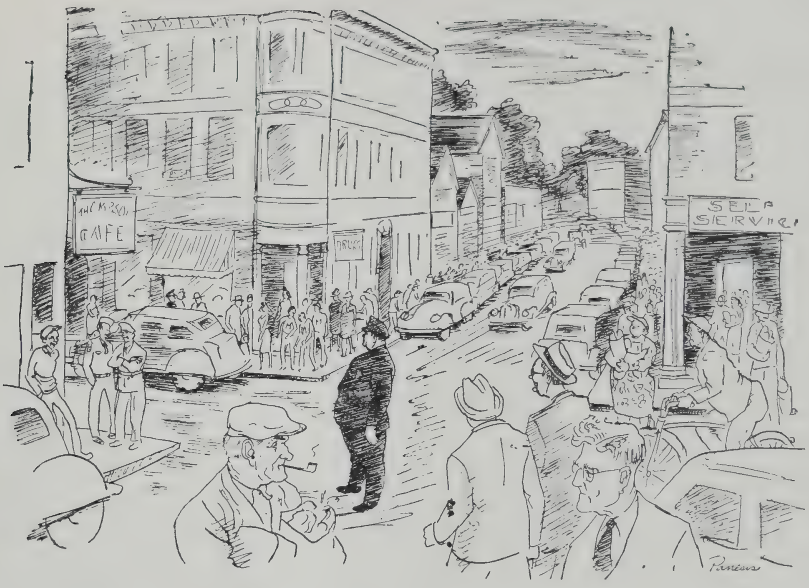
A note at the beginning of each article states, "This is a series examining the reactions of a typical Masachusetts small town to war-time living and post-war plans. The community discussed is Middleboro with a population of 9,000 because it typifies every small town everywhere in Massachusetts."

How little has changed, 1943 - 1974. Another post-war period, the same complaints about the inefficiency of government.

Old time residents will be recognized in the cartoons.



OPA getting it in the neck? Maybe, for Middleboro just like any other community, is impatient of goverment red tape — and says so. Whatever the topic of conversation, here's John Sullivan (with pipe) chatting with Bay O'Toole, while Tom Panesis (bending) serves customer at his delicatessen, and Johnny Boardman goes his way with his inevitable posters.



Middleboro Street Scene, Main and Center Streets. Saturday nights in the typical Massachusetts community finds the townspeople crowding the sidewalks in the pursuit of shopping, business and fun. This sketch discovers various townspeople at the square — Jimmy Rogers, George Donner, and Mr. Drew in the foreground, Patrolman Pittsley directing traffic and "Gramp" Goodwin on his bicycle.

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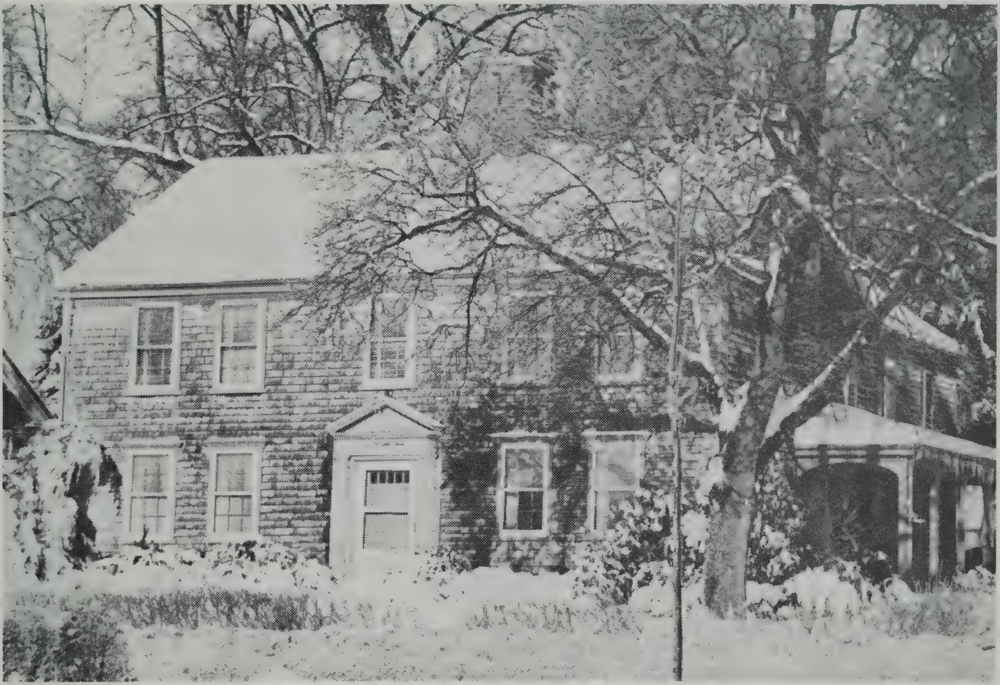

## THE "DR. ELLIS" HOUSE
### Centre Street, Middleboro

In the memory of most of the older generation, the house recently demolished on Centre Street, next to St. Luke's Hospital, is known as the "Dr. Ellis House." Dr. George E. Ellis is listed as the owner in the 1884 Middleboro Directory, the earliest one on file at the Middleborough Historical Museum. He was a very colorful character and can be vividly remembered pacing back and forth, hands behind his back, before the high brick wall that fronted his property.

In the Middleboro Antiquarian, November 1965, there is an article from an old scrapbook, entitled, "Glimpses of Middleboro in 1857." Included in the description of Centre Street is the statement, "At the right hand corner of Centre and Oak Streets, stood a small building used as a cobbler's shop by a respected but unfortunate personage known as 'Dummy Tinkham'. Beyond this was the Leonard House now owned by Dr. Ellis." The 1855 map of Middleboro clearly shows the little cobbler's shop on the corner of Oak and Centre Streets and the house next to it, with A. Leonard indicated as the owner. The first volume of the History of Middleboro or early directories give no clue as to who A. Leonard might have been.

Dr. George E. Ellis came to Middleboro in 1879 and probably purchased the house at that time. After his death in 1933, the property was owned by Mrs. William W. Wheeler, and to within a year's time was owned and occupied by her son George E. Wheeler. The house was demolished in December, 1974, and there are rumors that a professional building is to be erected on the site.

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## THE CAUSES OF KING PHILIP'S WAR

by Edward M. Pratt, Dartmouth College, '76.

*This paper was written by Mr. Pratt in fulfilling requirements for his history major at Dartmouth College.*

Late in June of 1675, war broke out in the Southern colonies of New England. It was no ordinary war, but rather a bitter war of extermination waged by the Wampanoag, Nipmuck and Narragansett Indians on one side, and the English settlers of Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Connecticut colonies on the other. It came to be known as King Philip's War and indeed, was perhaps the first major test for the blossoming English civilization of Southern New England. And it rapidly became clear that whichever side won would control the area's destiny for years to come.

King Philip's War was ultimately won by the English. But the loss to the colonies was staggering: over six hundred colonists were killed, or one out of every eleven men of age to bear arms; an estimated three hundred English women and children also perished. Over six hundred dwellings were burned, livestock was killed or chased away, thirteen settlements were totally wiped out, and many others were partially destroyed and subsequently deserted.[1] Douglas Leach, a noted expert on the war, has estimated that twenty years passed before English settlement in New England advanced to its pre-war limits, and forty years passed before settlement advanced significantly beyond its ante-bellum boundaries.

But if this war was staggering for the English, it was deadly for the Indians who fought them. The Indian forces were annihilated, their towns leveled, their property and land confiscated without recompense, and their culture was shattered. Never again would the once proud tribes of Southern New England threaten the English in this area. Their submission was total and forever.

But what caused King Philip's War? What events poisoned the once friendly and cooperative relationship between the Pilgrims and Massasoit and his people? Historians of the war point to several factors, but I think that in sum, three main things caused the war. First, the innate incompatibility of the two different cultures planted in the New England wilderness contributed to the final conflict. Secondly, the uncompromising and selfish attitude of the English also merits much blame for the deterioration of relations. To be sure, the Indians were not blameless in this respect, but were still far less culpable than their counterparts. And thirdly, Philip himself must bear some of the responsibility.

There are those who claim that from the start of European colonization, war between the whites and the red men was inevitable. Early relations between the two groups pointed in a different direction. From the beginning, the Wampanoag sachem, Massasoit, welcomed the English, aided them in almost every conceivable manner and allowed their settlement to survive at a time when he could easily have obliterated it. It is true, however, that Massasoit hoped to gain a military advantage over his enemies by means of help from English weaponry and technology.

However, intercourse between the Indians and the English was good for both. It allowed the Pilgrims to survive, and at the same time raised the Wampanoag standard of living through the introduction of guns and metal implements.[2] But as years passed, whites became economically independent of the Indians, and were no longer dependent on them for means of survival. Conversely, the Indian economy rapidly became inseparable from that of their neighbors. Thus early on, we have the framework for an economic conflict.

Basic to the deterioration of relations was the ever-increasing English control of the land.[3] Massasoit had been extremely generous to his English friends, alternately giving and selling (at low prices) huge tracts of land in Southeastern Massachusetts to them. His sons, Alexander and Philip continued the practice of selling land, but in order to pay their debts to English merchants.

The land "selling" problems arose in that the Indian culture had no concept of personal title to land. The money they accepted for the land, was in their eyes, a rent which allowed the English the right to use the land. And certainly, for the Indian, this "rent" did not preclude his continued use of the property alongside his "tenant". The colonists on the other hand, considered these transactions as final, conveying to them perpetual and exclusive ownership and title to the tract in question.

The misunderstanding was complete. It is easy to understand the mutual disillusionment that must have prevailed when the Indians went on to their mutual property to hunt, only to be chased off at gunpoint by a colonist irate at the trespasser.

Absentee ownership was also a problem. Frequently, the Indians would sell a piece of property to an Englishman, but the purchaser would not move onto the land or make any use of it. Consequently, the Indians would continue to live and hunt there, much to the dismay of the new owner. Such a situation is the documented Dedham, Massachusetts case, a problem that caused considerable friction over an extended period of years and resulted in the ultimate eviction of the Indian occupants.

Certainly by 1675, the Indians of the region were starting to feel crowded by the incessant encroachments and extensions of the English.[4] It was a situation conducive to problems.

Other conflicts between the different civilizations included English liquor and English justice. That English merchants sold firewater to the Indians cannot be denied, and the native lack of tolerance to it is well-documented. Drunken Indians were common, and they frequently got themselves into difficulty. But they could never understand why they should get into trouble because of a drink English traders were so eager to sell them. And when they did run into difficulty because of rum, or for any other reason, the Indians were always brought under English justice. In their tribal cultures, the Wampanoags and other tribes never had had an elaborate system of laws or courts, so the English concept and system of justice was alien to them. In addition, it was understandably very difficult to persuade an Indian that he was getting a fair and just trial in an English court. This legal discrepancy also contributed to the growing rift.

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Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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Another large point of conflict between white and red deals with their respective religions. During early relations, Massasoit insisted that the English make no attempts to Christianize his people.[5] Philip continued this opposition to conversion, but by 1675 fully a quarter of the tribal population of Southern New England was Christian. This religious attrition caused no little anxiety among Indian sachems, for it meant an erosion of their power and leverage. Despite protests by Philip and others to the English authorities, such men as the Rev. John Eliot continued their efforts with pagan Indians. These efforts gave rise to much mutual suspicion and antagonism, each side convinced of the others bad intents.

Throughout the first fifty years of relations between red and white in Southern New England, neither group was innocent of transgression or wrong. Indeed, trespass and theft was common to both sides. But after the first few years of settlement, and after the English had gained a stronger foothold in the area, they became increasingly intolerant and arrogant in their attitudes and actions with the Indians. More and more, the new settlers did exactly as they pleased, with little or no regard for the natives or their rights. As time passed,

> "unprincipled men flocked to the colonies; the Indians were dispersed and often harshly treated; and the forbearance which marked the early intercourse of the Pilgrims with the natives was forgotten."[6]

If the English wanted something, they frequently just took it. And if the Indian owner protested, he was bought off at a low price or referred to English justice. The attitude that Indians had no rights that the English were bound to respect was pervasive.[7] Indeed, the colonists and their leaders frequently interfered in inter- and intra-tribal disputes, imposing their will upon the natives either in order to maximize their personal gain, or to do what was "best" for tribal interests. While much of this meddling embittered some Indians against the English, it is interesting to note that it also frequently embittered tribes against one another. The fact that tribal rivalries and jealousies were so strong and acrimonious was one of the main reasons that the English were ultimately able to defeat their opponents. There can be no doubt but that a lack of powerful tribal unity, caused in part by the English, hurt the Indian cause.

Additionally, the general insistance by the English that the Indians accept all of English culture as a package was a catalyst in the deterioration of their relations. That the Indian should accept his religion as well as his rum was the virtually unanimous English opinion. And the Indian "savage" should be accordingly thankful for both. From the outset, the new colonists held the New England "heathen" in contempt. And one of these colonists' principle desires from the very beginning was to bring these dirty natives into conformity with their own, higher level of civilization. This was a goal that was consciously pursued, even at the expense of native culture. The absolute insistence on this acceptance was unwavering, and caused the Indians to be most resentful.

Similarly, the English attitude towards King Philip was arrogant and intolerant. Three times the colonial government of Plymouth forced him to sign agreements contrary to his peoples' best interests, and humiliated him in front of his followers. The leaders of the colonial governments consistently failed to treat Philip and other sachems with the respect due them as leaders of their tribes. Rather, the English were condescending and patronizing, and generally insisted that the English wishes and policy take precedence over Indian policy.

Perhaps the most brazen instance of English arrogance as far as the Indians were concerned, was the arrest and trial of three Wampanoag Indians for the murder of a fourth.[8] An Indian preacher named Sassamon was apparently murdered for having informed Plymouth officials as to Philip's whereabouts. The Wampanoags and other Indians as well denied that the three men on trial had anything to do with the "murder", or indeed, that Sassamon had ever been murdered at all. When the English ultimately executed the three Wampanoags for the murder, it infuriated the Indians.

As far as the various tribes were concerned, Sassamon's "murder" was an Indian problem, and as such, should be dealt with by Indians in their own way. English interference in a matter such as this, which was none of their business, was the most blatant example yet of just how far past the acceptable limit the English had gone. For the Indian of Southern New England, this was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. The colonists had simply gone too far.

Thus we can see that the English disposition towards the Native Americans was not at all well designed to foster cordial relations with them. Indeed, we can see that it did much to poison those very relations. At this point, "the Indians of the region had grievances enough to drive them to rebellion."[9]

No consideration of the causes of King Philip's War would be complete without considering Metacomet, the man for whom the conflict is named.

Son of Massasoit, Philip became sachem of the Wampanoags in 1662, after the death of his brother, Alexander. By all indications, Philip was a skilled diplomat and a good, though not great leader.[10] As noted earlier, he shared his father's opposition to English attempts to convert his people to Christianity. He also believed that he and his people were equal to the colonists, not subject to them.[11] Moreover, Philip was an intelligent and perceptive man who saw

> "that the English intended, by their proceedings, to crush out his own native race, and to take this domain entirely and exclusively to themselves."[12]

Such a realization undoubtedly caused Philip quite some concern.

Understanding his people's predicament, Philip did his best to circumvent it. He tried to withdraw his people from potentially dangerous situations, and tried to minimize contact with whites on dangerous issues. He even tried to play the colonies off against one another in order to gain concessions

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for his race.[13] Importantly though, Philip realized his Wampanoags could not resist the powerful English alone. Accordingly, he tried to unite all the regional tribes in a loose bargaining confederation in order to gain more leverage with the various colonial governments.

Nothing might have ever resulted from the growing range of problems between red and white in this area had it not been for Philip. He was a proud, vain man above all else. And he was extremely quick to take affront at any personal offense, be it real or imagined. So when the English arrested him and brought him to court on three different occasions to answer questions regarding his tribal alliances, he became irreversibly insulted. After the third of these court appearances at which Philip was forced to admit his personal guilt, his anger and outrage began to crystallize. His dissatisfaction with growing English power changed to a determination to rid his nation of them.

It is unclear whether genuine concern for his people or a personal vengeance drove Philip to press for a military alliance against the English settlers. I would venture that the genuine concern was there all along, but that it was Philip's hurt pride and vanity that motivated him to action against the "invaders." In the following months Philip diligently sought the active assistance of neighboring tribes for a future war against the English. And he succeeded in securing the Nipmucks of central Massachusetts and the Narragansetts of Rhode Island as allies.

But "Philip himself lacked those personal qualities of leadership which made Pontiac and Tecumseh formidable"[14], and his alliance foundered before it ever really got started. Because of bitter tribal rivalries, he failed to enlist the aid of such key tribes as the powerful Mohegans. This group along with the "Praying Indians" would be a great help to the colonists cause, actively giving them military aid.

Philip was responsible for the formation of the original conspiracy against the English. But once formed, he rapidly lost control of it until he was little more than a leader among leaders. The actual fighting began before the conspiracy was complete, and before the combined Indian tribes were ready for it. And the Indians went on to lose to the English for a variety of reasons.

I think then, that it is fair to say that King Philip's War was the culmination of unresolvable cultural differences and because of a belligerent, insistent English attitude. To be sure, the conspiring Indians were not innocent in this respect. But the intensity of the hostile English attitude was far greater, and a larger factor in causing the conflict. Philip provided an intelligence and a personality suitable to serve as a catalyst; he was the spark necessary to ignite Southern New England's already smoldering hatred, contempt and tragic misunderstanding.

When the conflagration ended, here in the English colonies of New England "(had) ended forever the last great struggle that foreshadowed the final fate of the red man on this continent." [15]

PEACE BE TO THEIR MEMORY!

### FOOTNOTES

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10. Tompson, Benjamin. *New England Crisis,* Boston: The Club of Odd Volumes, 1894.

## A NOTE OF THANKS

Ever since the Middleborough Antiquarian was established in 1959, Robert H. Howes of Winthrop-Atkins Company has addressed, sorted and mailed each issue of the Antiquarian. To correct change of addresses, add names of new subscribers and members, to keep these lists accurate and up-to-date, required a tremendous amount of time and effort. We are deeply grateful to Mr. Howes for his loyal service throughout these sixteen years.

## QUERY

Mr. M. H. Ball of 818 Whitsett Avenue, North Hollywood, California, (91605) is looking for the family history of David Ball, born October 2, 1794 (91); married Abigail Hull of Massachusetts, 1817. More information about the Ball family would be greatly appreciated sent to the above address.

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## THE COURTLAND STREET TELEGRAPH

by Clint Clark

Before I happened to see two boys trying out two-way radio sets in a nearby field I had quite forgotten the Courtland Street telegraph line.

Boys of the present day need not spend the time and energy we did to build a communications system. Thanks to the development of miniature electrical components and circuits, they can now buy a compact "walkie-talkie" for about the same price as a pocket-size transistor radio.

But, 40 years ago or so, it was "do-it-yourself" or it wasn't done. And so, several boys in the neighborhood pooled their limited knowledge of the mysteries of electricity and built their own private telegraph line.

It connected three houses, covering a distance of 200-300 feet, for which we first needed a considerable amount of wire. This was obtained by unwinding the field coils from several discarded automobile generators.

After straightening the kinks, the wires were strung through the trees and over rooftops to complete the circuit. Before we were through it developed into a fairly intricate network, as will be seen.

At first, however, we were satisfied to find that we could send messages back and forth, using Morse code. Then we discovered that we also could transmit and receive our voices, and were as thrilled as Alexander Graham Bell when he gave Mr. Watson his historic summons.

No further elaboration of the Courtland Street line was called for. But, having the wires up and dry cell batteries of sufficient power, we went on to add flashing lights which gave us a third method of communicating.

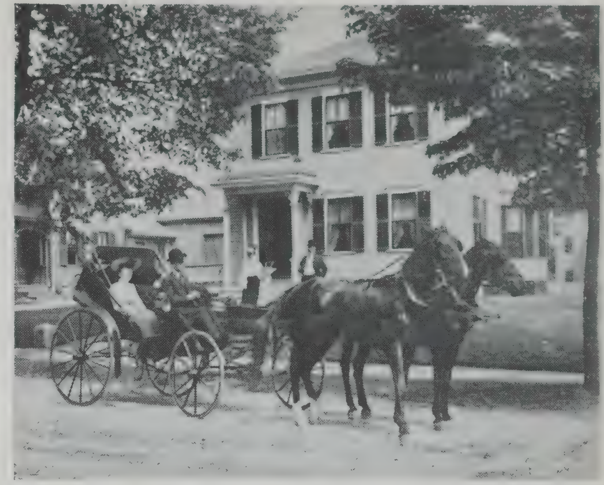
To change from one system to another required a series of switches, the operation of which, on our impressive "control panels" made us feel like first rate technicians. Moreover, the line was to prove of some practical value when an epidemic of scarlet fever broke out in town.

The other two operators escaped, but, confined to bed with the fever for several weeks, I was kept in touch with school doings and other matters of mutual interest through daily schedules with them, via the line.

The fun we had with the Courtland Street line was, however, overshadowed by a vague fear that it was illegal to string wires in trees, especially near public telephone and electric light lines. Caution prevailed when we began to pick up telephone conversations other than our own and not long thereafter we abandoned our experiment.

We were motivated by the popularity of such activities at that time, largely inspired by magazines of interest to boys. They often featured plans for building simple crystal radio receivers, telegraph sounders and keys, induction coils and sound detectors.

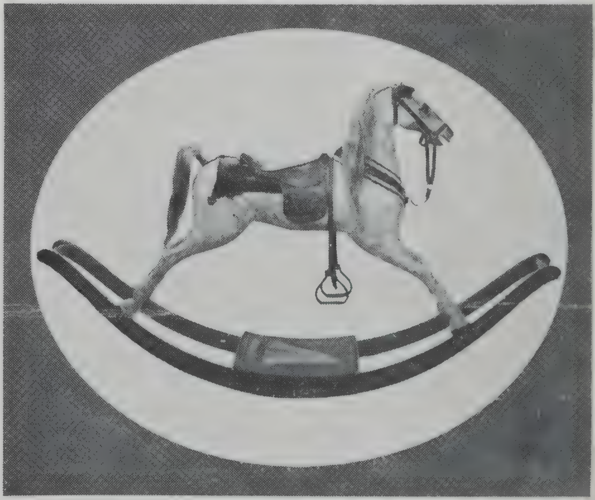
A discarded oatmeal box, wound with fine wire, plus a few radio parts, made a simple receiver. Odds and ends of wire and scrap metal made a telegraph sounder or crude telephone. Today a boy can do it all by purchasing a kit from Radio Shack, or similar source. I hope they enjoy them as much as we did the Courtland Street telegraph-telephone-blinker system, all homemade.



**DR. SILLIKER HOUSE**

**Oak Street**

At the time this picture was taken, about 1900, the house was owned by Dennis D. Sullivan, later Judge Sullivan of the Fourth District Court. In all probability the persons shown were members of the Sullivan family.



# TWIGS & BRANCHES

of

# Olde Middleborough

in

# Plymouth County
# Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*
*Certified Genealogist*

Many of our habits, our speech, our opinions are colored by our background and by those with whom we were associated during our early years. Middleborough was one of those halfway towns. It bordered the areas into which the second and third generation Pilgrims were moving. Middleborough also became 'home' to many Pilgrim families. But the Puritan families were here also and with the many intermarriages over the years it is interesting to find that many persons in Middleborough who are descendants of the original settling families can claim Mayflower ancestry if they wish to.

It is also interesting to note what itchy feet some of the early residents and their children had. Today, we think nothing of having relatives on the west coast, in Florida, Texas or Alaska. Transportation today is so easy and fast.

But our ancestors had no airplanes nor automobiles. In the early days it was following the paths of the Indians or perhaps for the very venturesome hewing their own way through the woods with the aid of an axe. Today a Middleborough resident can go to Plymouth in a very short time . . . or to Brockton, Taunton or other nearby places.

I'm sure many of you have heard (and probably used) the expression 'as the crow flies' indicating that the road to another town was round-about and not direct. We travel to Brockton, Plymouth or Taunton easily and quickly. But the route to Hingham or Duxbury from Middleborough is less direct and certainly not 'as the crow flies.' If you will permit it to, this difference tells you something about the communities. It indicates that traffic or communication between certain towns was made convenient by making paths and later on roads between the towns. In other areas there was less direct contact between the townspeople and the roads were not established to permit quick travelling back and forth.

If you are interested in genealogy, that is, your family history, this close communication or lack of it, can suggest where to start looking for that very elusive ancestor "Sarah" somebody or other who married into the Cushman or perhaps the Thomas family.

The Rev. Samuel Fuller was the first minister of the First Church of Middleborough. Today we consider this section East Middleborough and the church is often spoken of as the church at the Green. Samuel Fuller, (the Reverend Samuel), was the son of Dr. Samuel Fuller who came on the Mayflower. He is buried on 'the Hill' as it was called . . Nemasket Hill Cemetery. He was not a college graduate a many early ministers were but he was 'learned' according to all reports. It is interesting to note that he preached for sixteen years before he was ordained. He died the 17th of August 1695 . . . in his 71st year. His wife was Elizabeth and she died 4 November 1713 and is buried in Plympton.

John Alden, the grandson of John Alden who came on the Mayflower, settled in Titicut and died at the age of 56 on 29 September 1730. It was not until 1750 that the Indian, John Thomas, gave land for the Titicut Parish Cemetery. John Alden was a member of the First Church.

Alfred Wood's book of Middleborough deaths does not contain every single burial record . . . there are gaps and omissions but it does offer much in the way of information on the early settlers. Under the surname Pike we find an entry reading as follows: PIKE . . ., a foreign pauper, Feb. 10, 1811, age 75 yrs." This is an entry from the Rev. Barker's records. The Rev. Barker preached at First Church from 1781 to 1815 and without doubt his records included the deaths of those persons at whose funerals he officiated.

If we were to assume that the words "foreign pauper" indicated an alien or 'non-American' we might be correct in stating the person Pike was a Norwegian, a German or perhaps an Irishman . . . but there is also the fact that our early settlers used the term 'foreign' to indicate that the person was not a local resident. The term 'stranger' was also used to indicate the same thing . . . and the 'home' of the deceased person might only have been as far away from Middleborough as Sharon or Hingham . . . or perhaps only one of the Bridgewaters. Our local history is very closely woven with the nearby towns. Members of the various families may have been buried in cemeteries in several towns even though the family is considered 'as of Middleborough' for a place of residence.

Just as in various other towns . . . Middleborough cemeteries have their share of interesting and sometimes unusual tombstone inscriptions. Wood's book of Middleborough deaths can be quite confusing if the codes are not checked out since private records, Church entries, newspaper listings as well as the cemeteries have all been consulted and included in the book. In fact the greater portion of the records are from sources other than cemeteries in Middleborough.

In 1742 Woodward Tucker, aged nine (9) years, was admitted to the First Church of Middleborough. He died aged 28 'leaving a good report in the church.' He was the son of Benjamin Tucker and his wife, Sarah (Woodward) Tucker. Woodward had a brother, Benjamin Tucker, Jr. who married Mary Thomas and was dismissed in 1786 to Randolph, Vermont. It is thought he died there aged 77 about 1815.

Timothy Fuller born in 1721, joined First Church in 1742 and was dismissed in 1766 to Attleboro, Mass. His brother Jabez Fuller removed to Medfield, Massachusetts where he and his three children Thomas, Jabez and Jonathan all practised medicine. He died in Medfield, Massachusetts in 1781.

In 1726 Samuel Barrows, Jr. and his wife Susannah joined the First Church and in 1740 they were dismissed to Killingly, Connecticut. They had six sons and two daughters.

With so much moving about of our early Colonial ancestors it is small wonder that many persons know very little of their background. No New Englander should ever make a glib statement that all his family came from Middleborough or from Sutton or some other town. Those restless feet kept a great many families on the move and many of us have a truly New England background with some relative or ancestor living at least part of his life in each of the states.

## THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS - in 1904

### Middleboro

*Interesting subjects brought to mind*
*with end of year* (1904)

Middleboro - Dec. 31, 1904 — The close of the year brings to mind many of the happenings and achievements of the past twelve months. Probably the one most pleasant for the residents to contemplate is the new public library on North Main Street, which was built from a fund of $50,000 which was left the town by Thomas Sproat Peirce. The library was opened to the public April 25, and has since been open daily.

The residents have shown their appreciation of the gift in many ways, and the business at the library is on the increase.

What is considered as the worst features of the year is the fire which on October 4 destroyed the plant of the shoe manufacturing firm of Alden, Walker & Wilde, followed by the removal of that firm from this town to Weymouth, where they are now engaged making shoes. Their removal deprived about 100 persons of employment at the factory here.

The agitation which has been started concerning tramp houses, and the possibility of asking the legislature to abolish them, is followed with interest here. The Cabot Club took the matter up some time ago and investigated the subject. At that time the members recommended a stipulated amount of work in consideration for the entertainment furnished by the town. It has been the custom to work the men a little around the town farm here, and the number of "guests" is kept down pretty well.*

The death of Charles E. Leonard, the veteran shoe manufacturer, Tuesday morning, has been the principal topic of conversation this week. Mr. Leonard died suddenly in his office. He was a man who, starting as a poor boy, worked his way until he was one of the richest men in town. From the humble beginning of his business, with but a few men in his employ, the firm has grown until at both their factories there are about 900 employed. He left two sons, Charles M., and Arthur H., who are interested in the business, and one daughter, Mrs. Guy G. Major of New York.

The annual old folks party, which has come to be a fixture in the social year, will be held in the town hall Monday night. Hon. David G. Pratt is president of the organization.

A raise in fares has been decreed by the management of the Old Colony street railway as a result of the visit of officers of the road here early this week. It is claimed that in order to meet the expenses the road will need to charge a larger fare. Accordingly an increase had been made which makes the fare between Middleboro and New Bedford 30 cents instead of 25, and raises the Brockton fare from 15 to 25. The fare from Middleboro to the junction of Pleasant and South Streets in Bridgewater is to be 15 cents. Fare limits have been designated by signs and it has been said there will be concessions on fare limits as has been the custom.

After passing some time without an anniversary celebration, E. W. Peirce W.R.C., has started arrangements for the observance of their anniversary in a fitting manner. The committee met Friday night and started arrangements for the affair, which will be held Jan. 13.

*The present generation knows nothing of the "tramps" who were a common sight in the early part of the century. Men who made unemployment their profession traveled from town to town, house to house, begging food. It was said they had a secret way of marking a house as being a good prospect for a generous handout. Sometimes the tramps, often dressed in rags, would offer to chop wood or do other chores to pay for the gift of food. They were a particular lot, and many a time the food handed to them in a paper bag would be found thrown behind a fence or stonewall, discarded.

"Tramp Hollow" or "Tramp Kitchen" was a well known spot to these kings of the road and a group of them could almost always be found gathered around a fire beside the railroad tracks not far from the South Main Street bridge.

At about the time this newspaper item was written, 1904, the "poor house" on Wood Street, provided shelter for tramps. There was a small building set aside as a "tramp house," and the annual town budget included a "Tramp House Account" to keep the house in repair and supply bedding.

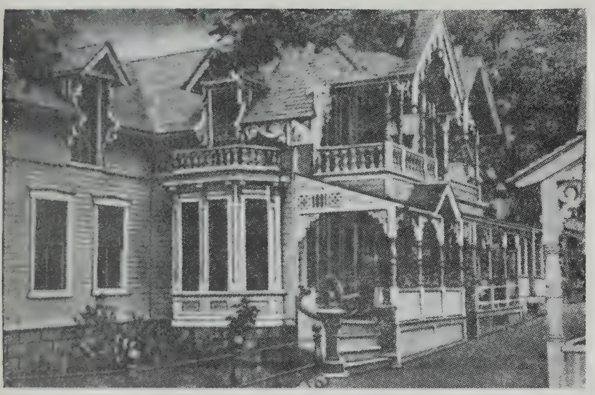
It was the duty of the Overseers of the Poor to maintain this house and one report concluded as follows:

"The number of nature's noblemen making pedestrianary excursions through our town and usually calling on us for entertainment at our Waldorf Astoria Annex, has decreased from 406 last year to 160 this year. This may be owing to their distaste for the dainty refreshments served them, or the balmy breezes from the Nemasket River may prove too trying to their constitutions. However, we hope that for the ensuing year, they may continue to find fresh fields and pastures new for their peregrinations, and meanwhile leave us to bear our loss with fortitude and resignation."

## THE ADAMS SISTERS

### Two Little Midgets of Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Lucy and Sarah Adams were born on the island of Martha's Vineyard. They attended public schools on the Vineyard and lead normal lives, but Sarah never grew taller than forty-six inches and Lucy no taller than forty-nine. They lived in the Adams homestead which remained in the family for 240 years, until in their later years the sisters sold it and took up residence in that famous portion of the island known as "Cottage City" or "The Tabernacle Campground." The campground was known far and wide for the annual camp meetings held there for many years and for the "gingerbread" houses which surrounded the campground.



**Home of the Adams sisters, Oak Bluffs, Mass.**

One of the gingerbread houses facing the famous Tabernacle Campground.

When Lucy was eighteen years old, a local minister asked the sisters to appear in a play being presented by his son in a church in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Up to that time, their mother had refused all offers for the little sisters to appear on the stage, but because this request was made by their minister and friend, she gave her consent. The play was "Little Red Riding Hood." Lucy took the leading role and received enthusiastic praise in the local papers. Mrs. Tom Thumb, a resident of nearby Middleboro, saw the newspaper articles and invited the sisters to visit her. The mother was adamant in her refusal to allow her daughters to make the trip. Mrs. Tom Thumb sent an emissary with a letter and money for expenses; the result was that Lucy and Sarah visited Mrs. Tom Thumb and subsequently traveled with the Tom Thumb troupe intermittently for forty years. Lucy and Sarah became Mrs. Tom Thumb's closest friends.

Whenever they appeared with the Tom Thumb troupe, the sisters took part in the parades preceding each performance. While General Tom Thumb and Mrs. Tom Thumb rode in their miniature coach drawn by Shetland ponies with a midget coachman holding the reins, the Adams sisters rode on two little Welsh ponies and wore long riding habits and tall hats. They recounted that the ponies knew exactly when the parade was over and would streak off for the stable, uncontrollable, but the sisters clung on, never fell off, and always reached the stable safely.

On Easter Sunday, April 6, 1885, when Mrs. Tom Thumb became Countess Magri at her wedding with Count Magri in Trinity Church, New York, Lucy Adams was the bridesmaid Her sister Sarah entered the church on the arm of Baro Magri, the Count's brother. Sarah was dressed all in pink — beaded dress and kid gloves to her shoulders, and many mistook them for the bridal couple.

There were interruptions in their travels with the Tom Thumbs due to the sisters' appearances with the Lilliputian Opera Company and on the Chautauqua circuit, being the only midgets ever permitted on the Chautauqua stage. The girls' mother was a strict Methodist and brought up her daughters to keep the Sabbath. They absolutely refused to perform on Sunday and accepted no engagements that included Sunday performances. In the latter days of their public appearances, they devoted all their efforts to the evangelistic field, giving religious concerts in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

Sarah died in 1938, the result of an accident. One night after a concert, a young woman insisted on driving the sisters back to their hotel. Because she drove recklessly, a door flew open, throwing Sarah out onto the pavement. She never recovered from the experience. Because of this, the sisters retired to the island, sold the old homestead, and moved into one of the gingerbread houses on the campground, which had been left to them by a cousin.

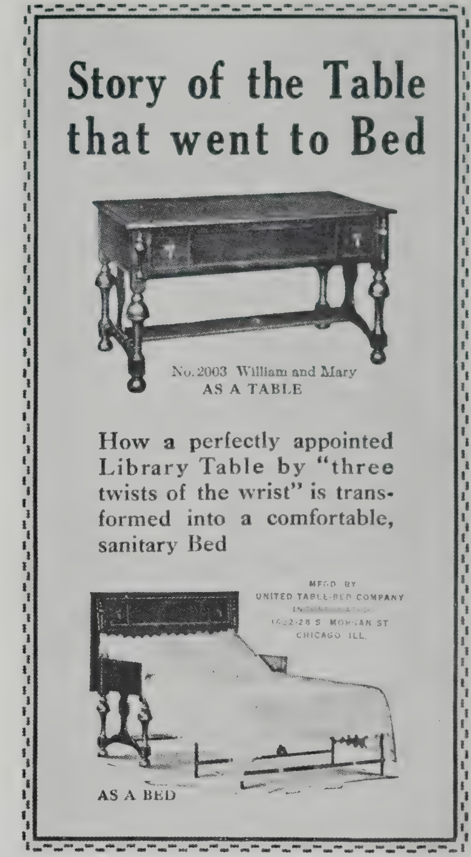
Lucy and Sarah Adams, when they were young women and appearing on the stage.

On her 90th birthday, in 1951, Lucy held open house for her host of friends. The celebration had to be postponed for a day because the birthday fell on a Sunday. She said at her birthday celebration, "A lot of people live to be ninety, but not many are as well and as smart as I am." At this time, she was enjoying the hobby of dressing dolls. In the Middleborough Historical Museum, in a glass case with newspaper clippings about the two little sisters, is one of the dolls she dressed, beautifully attired in orchid moire silk, with bouffant [illegible]irt and a smart little hat, the entire costume embellished [illegible]d garlanded with bows and rows of pale green silk ribbon.

Miss Lucy Adams, 90, chatting with Norman W. Lindsay, president of the Middleboro Historical Society, before presenting her program, November 5, 1951.

On November 5, 1951, at ninety years of age, Miss Lucy appeared before the Middleborough Historical Society. Braving the ocean voyage and winter weather on the crossing from Vineyard Haven to Woods Hole, she arrived at the meeting bright and sparkling, accompanied by a friend. As she presented her entertainment, she stood on the platform, scorning to use a microphone most of the time, and related reminiscences of her travels and experiences. At the close, she [illegible]mazed her audience by reciting entirely from memory the poem "Hiawatha's Wooing." After a similar performance before another audience, one listener exclaimed, "I wonder if you people here tonight know what you are hearing! You will never hear the like of it again."

Miss Adams died of pneumonia in December, 1954, at the age of ninety-three, bright, vivacious, and charming to the end.



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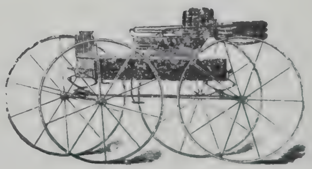

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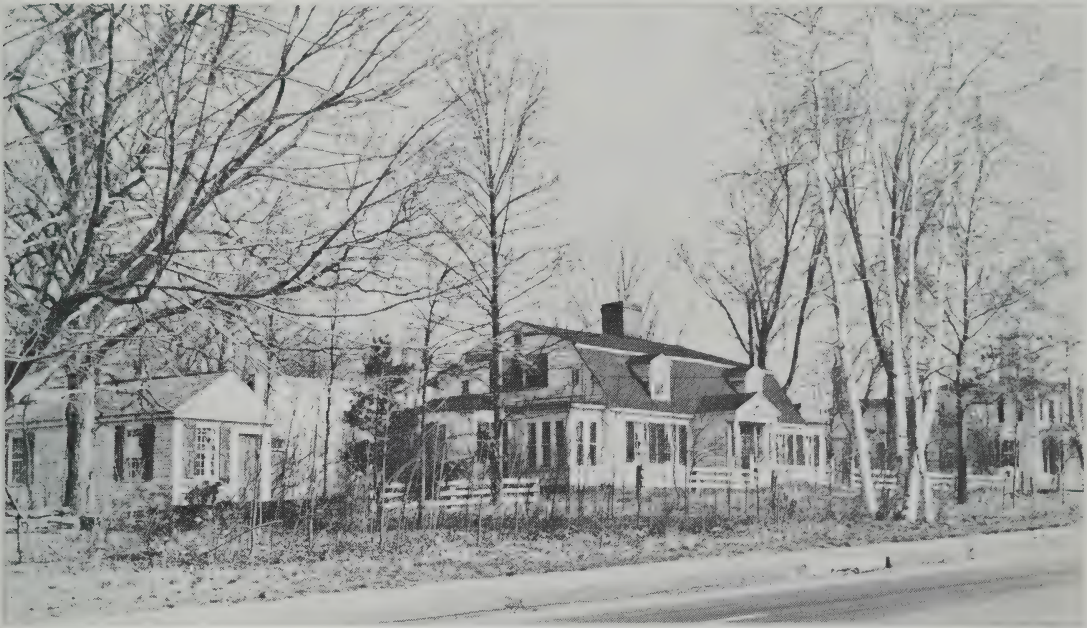

## JUDGE WILKES WOOD HOUSE SOUTH MAIN STREET

*Photo by Clint Clark*

The above picture is an excellent representation of what South Main Street used to be before it became "Gasoline Alley," a section of Middleboro graced by dignified old homes. The building in the center of the photograph was the home of Judge Wilkes Wood, one of the most able lawyers of his time. He lived in the house most of his life. The dwelling was built by John Morton in the early 1700's. Mr. and Mrs. Granville E. Tillson and family occupied the home from 1924 until Mr. Tillson's death in 1947, at which time it became the property of Mr. and Mrs. John Vincent Sullivan, Jr.

The little law office to the south of the main house is thought to have been built by Judge Wood about 1796. When in 1965 Mr. and Mrs. Sullivan sold the property to the Fernandes Company, and knew the house and law office were to be torn down, they presented the law office to the Middleborough Historical Museum and Mr. Joseph Fernandes financed the cost of moving the building to the Museum grounds.

The house on the extreme right of the photograph was probably built in the middle 1800's. It was for many years the home of Fayette W. Hayden, a local optician and jeweler, who in 1906 sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Stephen F. O'Hara. They occupied the property until 1946 when it was purchased by Mrs. Esther L. (Fish) Burgess. In 1968, the beautiful old home with its widow's walk was demolished to make way for a Shell Oil Station.

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# A RARE ATLATL RECOVERY FROM TITICUT

by William B. Taylor

In the spring of 1971, permission was sought and granted to excavate a section of the Titicut Site, not previously explored during excavation by the Warren King Moorehead Chapter of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society from 1946 to 1951. Selection of this area was prompted by recoveries made on the Seaver Farm in Bridgewater during 1969 and 1970. Here had been uncovered a crematory and 11 secondary cremation burials. These were reported with map and illustrations of the grave goods found, in Society Bulletin, Volume 31 (No. 3 & 4) and Volume 33 (No. 3 & 4) plus Antiquarian Volume XIII (No. 2, 3 & 4) and Volume XIV (No. 1, 2 & 3).

Since these burial pits were so unusual, I decided to explore the surrounding area in hope of finding additional cremations. I was joined by Society members Roland Engstrom and Roy Piver in excavating a 20 foot wide trench, extending westward from the crematory. After continuing our trench some 55 feet without finding sufficient evidence of occupation, we decided to look for a more productive spot to dig. Test holes were made to the north into a pine grove, which approached a small knoll at the further end. Here, encouraging occupational evidence began to appear and in May 1972 we started a thorough excavation of this area.

On May 27, 1972 a most unusual find was made by Roy Piver at the bottom of the loam, 10 inches from ground level. One wing of a Wing atlatl weight, about 2 inches long, with part of the central drilling preserved was uncovered. Made of a greenish chlorite, it displayed a mass of hundreds of regimented, tiny picked-out dents that covered both faces of the wing. These were interspersed at places by many short, fine incised lines on both faces, as well as along both edges. This was an exciting find with a fascinating intricate decoration, unlike anything we had ever seen before.

But what happened on the following Saturday, when we resumed work, was beyond anyone's fondest expectation. A large pine tree prevented the forward progress of our excavation, which caused me to shift to one side of this immovable obstacle. Just then, as I started to remove the surface accumulation of pine needles, a familiar-looking stone appeared at the top of the loam. Similar to the single wing of the atlatl weight previously recovered, it was found to fit into it contiguously, and so completed this fancifully decorated Wing atlatl weight. It was now wholly complete except for one small fractured part that was missing; later restored. The additional wing lay about 10 feet distant from the first, and separated from it in depth by about 9", probably as a result of the plow. The meticulous design embellishment of this intriguing artifact has been illustrated in an attempt to reveal the immense amount of careful designing and workmanship that must have gone into its production. (Fig. 19)

## DESIGN DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION

Intrigued by the multitude of dents and marks of this atlatl weight, I spent several days with a magnifying glass counting the myriad of dent impressions. There are over 950 of them, all separate from one another except for a very few. On one face appear 12 lines of these tiny, stylus pecked-out dents that follow the graceful outline of the wings, while 5 long and 3 shorter lines extend over the opposite face. On one wing among the dents occur 3 fine horizontal incised lines, crossed by short lines and 3 chevrons, while at the bottom of both wings on one side are short vertical incised lines. These may be the quills of feathers that are defined by dents made along each of the lines. Along parts of the weight's edges at opposite ends of the wings appear groups of short incised marks. These are more or less evenly spaced and fill completely one edge from tip to tip of the wings. They seem to be a decorative feature of some kind that may have a meaning; presumably are not tally marks because of their evenly spread symmetrical positioning.

This highly engraved Wing atlatl weight is centrally perforated with an irregularly drilled hole of about ⅝" in diameter. Even though the stone material of the weight is chlorite — a talc softened stone — it is hard enough to have posed a problem for the artisan, who may have used a quartz crystal stylus to engrave the elaborate decoration that covers it. What the engraving is intended to portray, of more than a decorative piece of work, is a provocative question. William S. Fowler,

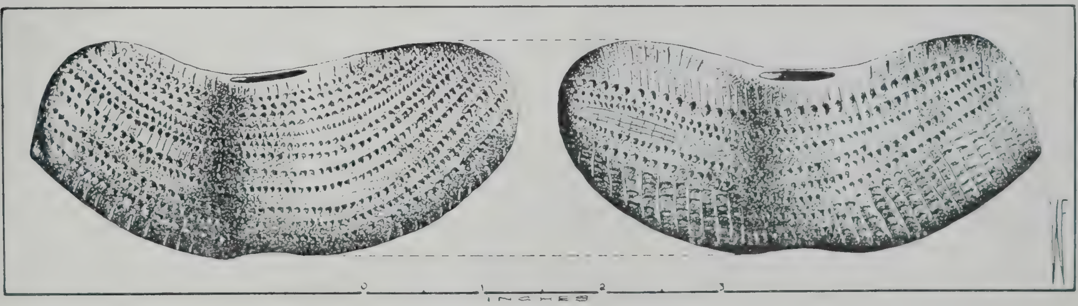

Figure 19. ENGRAVED ATLATL WEIGHT, Titicut Excavation. This illustration is submitted by courtesy of William S. Fowler, Bronson Museum, Attleboro, Mass.

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Editor of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, has offered one interpretation that seems to be the only sensible one at the moment. It is hoped that other interesting theories may be forthcoming now that an illustration of the atlatl weight has been made for careful study.

The interpretation is based upon a belief that, as previously mentioned, the 27 short vertical lines along which appear pecked dents, found along the convex edge of one face of the weight, represent feathers. Augmented by the rows upon rows of dents over both faces, they may typify the feathers of the wings. If so, this engraved portrayal might be symbolic of a flying bird such as an eagle, with the intent of introducing a mystical power of flight to speed the ejected spear to its mark.

Over the past 30 years of surface hunting in the Titicut area single fragments from 2 Wing atlatl weights have been found, each with a few superficial scratched markings. Besides this insignificant evidence of a possible decorative effort in marking these weights, no other specimens are known to have appeared with even a semblance of worked decoration. With such a noticeable absence of engraved weights, the present Titicut specimen becomes more impressive as an exceptional example of aboriginal stone engraving, the interpretation of which is tantalizingly obscure.

### References

TAYLOR, WILLIAM B. AND FOWLER, WILLIAM S.
1974 — An Engraved Wing Atlatl Weight, Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, Inc., Vol. 36, Nos. 1 and 2, Attleboro, Mass.

## TRADITIONS OF FAMOUS OLD HOUSES IN MIDDLEBORO

Granville Temple Sproat
from an old scrapbook

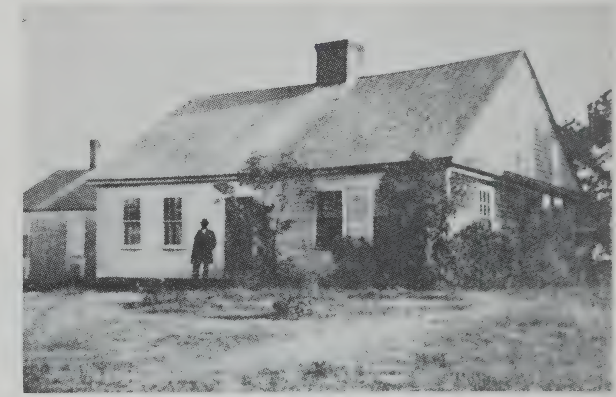
### THE OLD BENNETT HOUSE

This venerable relic of the olden time, remembered by some of us still living, was built soon after the close of King Philip's war, about the time the settlers returned from Plymouth, (whither they had fled during the first years of the war,) and commenced rebuilding their ruined homes, made desolate by savage warfare. It was built by John Bennett, who emigrated from Bristol, England, in 1665, settled first in Jamestown, Virginia, and afterwards removed to Beverly, Massachusetts. He was there when that terrible scourge of New England, the Salem Witchcraft, spread its withering blight through all the towns north-east of Boston, filling with terror and dismay the hearts of the peaceful settlers, and bringing desolation and death into many of their quiet homes. Probably to escape its withering curse, as well as to secure personal safety, John Bennett removed from Beverly to Weymouth — a place somewhat remote from the bloody scenes of the drama. From Weymouth he removed to Middleboro, in 1688, and built his first house here; soon after his second one — the old residence of which we have spoken.

The old house was erected after the fashion of many others of that period, with a single front; a porch projecting from one end, also fronting the highway. In its interior it was low in its ceilings, with large beams crossing the rooms overhead; while the sills and sleepers beneath rested on the ground. It looked as though it was built to resist the assaults of time, hundreds of years, with its huge frame work all built of solid oak.

The old house was the birthplace of many noble men and women, who with their descendants have found a home on its domains for eight generations. Some of them have been quite distinguished in the history of the old town that gave them birth, of whom we shall hereafter have occasion to speak. Among its early progenitors several anecdotes have also been related of one of them distinguished for his eccentricities, as well as for his homely industry, and closely economical habits. Although possessed of large landed estates, he always wore his suit of plain homespun gray( with no other color than that of the the native wool of the sheep; and, for buttons for the same, he used the hide of the animals he had slaughtered for food, cut into whatever shape he wished, and sewed on with strong cord to keep them in their place.

In this singular costume he went, one day, to Boston, and stopped at a tavern there (we presume the famous old "Sun Tavern", then so well known) and called for his supper and lodgings. The landlord, surprised at such an unusual appearance, and taking him for some tramp or vagabond from the street, demanded of him whether he had the money to pay for his supper and his night's lodgings. Upon hearing this, the sturdy old farmer pulled out from his pocket a piece of sheep skin, and rolling out from it a *one hundred dollar bill*, he asked the landlord if that was enough. "If it is not enough," said he, "I will send out to Middleboro and get more; So I think you will be satisfied." On hearing this the astonished landlord concluded to take him in, and give him the best that the famous old tavern afforded.



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## THE GREAT SNOW STORM OF 1717

Of the great snow storm of 1717, so often spoken of by the old inhabitants of Middleboro, and which is closely associated with the history of the old Bennett house, the most direct traditions have reached us through the descendants of the old Morton family. According to these, the storm commenced on Sunday and lasted till Wednesday night. The snow descended to the depth of seven feet, and often, when drifted, to the depth of ten or twelve. The windows of all the lower stories were darkened, making the house look gloomy and tomb-like within. So great was the weights of the snow on the roof, that the inhabitants feared that it would be crushed in, and they carried up supporters into the garrett, to prevent it. They dug paths *under* the snow to the barn, and packed the snow, taken out, into the *leanto* in the rear of the house. They could get no water to drink, (the well being some distance from the house,) and they had to melt snow for their own use, and that of their cattle. They saw none of their neighbors, at the old Morton house, for three days. Then, Mr. Abraham Miller, their nearest neighbor, came walking over the snow on snow-shoes. He said, "I walked over the top of my own orchard, coming here, and I could see only the tops of many of the trees. I should have thought that I had been walking through a field filled with bushes, instead of apple-trees. I could not make myself believe that it was my own orchard I was walking over." He had come to borrow meal for his family use, as it was impossible to mill through the deep snows, and the families in the neighborhood had to depend on each other for meal until they could break their way to mill. After the snows, came a thaw and a freshet, owing to the rapid melting of the great body of snow that lay on the ground. The Nemasket river presented a roaring flood, overflowing its banks and endangering all the houses that stood near its shores and tearing away the foundations of both bridges and gristmills, by its furious current. It was such a freshet as had never before been seen, and the great snowstorm and the freshet that followed were never forgotten during the life time of the old inhabitants of the town of Middleboro.

### CHANGES

Mrs. Mercy Bennett during her long life saw great changes in the town in which she lived. She had seen the log cabins of the early settlers give place to neat and comfortable homes, and the narrow forest clearings surplanted by broad acres of rich upland farms and bright meadows stretching far away in the distance. Instead of by-ways and narrow upland paths were broad highways leading toward the great centers of civilization. She had seen school-houses and churches where once stood the wigwam of the Indian, and the Pioneer's cabin surrounded by pathless wilds. In her old age she expressed gratitude for all this, and is said to have been full of thankfulness and praise to the Great Giver for all his mercies.

She lies buried in the old burying ground on the Green among those she knew and loved. She was full of happiness at the thought of meeting her friends again in "other worlds, and beneath fairer skies" far beyond this changing world of time and death. Her name stands high among the worthy whom Middleboro may be proud to honor, — the ancient mothers of the town who lived here before us, who went forth sowing golden grain, of which we all, this day, are reaping an abundant harvest.

## WHITE OAK ISLAND

By Lyman Butler

A short way up Plain Street from Thompson Street off to the right in the swamp is an island called White Oak Island although at dry times in the year it is possible to get to this place by a woods road. This place got its name from the large amount of white oak trees which grew there. This was one of the main supplies of cord wood which fed the fires of the old Sampson brick yard at Purchade.

Although I have not gone into this spot for a good many years every once in a while the name White Oak is brought up by some old timer who knew about it years ago. Such a one was the late Charles Shaw who used to live at the Warrentown end of Plain Street around nineteen hundred. With his father he ran a dairy farm and milk route. In the Winter months he and his helpers cut wood on this island. Frank Thomas who lived with Lorenzo Carter worked for Charlie and when the milk was delivered in town the bottles washed and everything in order till milking time, off they would go to the woods. At the time the price for cutting wood was ninety cents a cord and a good days work was a cord and a half. When a good supply was cut they would hitch up the team and along with Elija Ober and his team they would haul the wood out of the swamp to a spot near the road where the brick yard team would pick it up and transport it to the hungry fires of the brick yard kilns. For this operation Mr. Shaw and Ober would get a dollar a cord. Mr. Shaw also had a team of oxen which you old timers will know were much better in mud than a horse as a horse's hoof will cause a suction, being wider at the bottom than the top where an oxen's hooves are split and when they put their foot down they close the hooves together and easily pull out of the mud, if not too deep.

White Oak was not the only place Mr. Sampson got wood for his brick yard. In the rear of his home on Everett Street was a swamp which had a good amount of wood which he hired cut but no one dared go in with a pair of horses as it was treacherous ground, so he made a deal with Charlie to haul it out with his oxen. For this he was to pay the magnificent sum of one dollar and a half a cord. According to Charlie there was not much money made on the deal as even the oxen would get stuck in the mud and have to be pulled out with the help of a chain fall. Finally after nearly losing one of the animals in a pot hole Mr. Sampson called it quits. He said the animal was worth more than the wood so that was that.

Back to White Oak. Mr. Shaw said that one winter they cut three hundred and twenty-five cords of wood there, so you can see how much wood was used in the fires of the brick yard, as this was only one of the many sources of fuel. Oak wood was not the only kind on the island as Mr. Shaw said that he and Mr. Ober hauled many cord of pine logs to Clark and Cole's Mill on Cambridge Street.

I presume that the area of White Oak Island is on the land purchased by the new brick yard (Kelsey-Ferguson) and sooner or later they will be taking the clay which is under the surface for bricks, a kind of coincidence that at one time the wood which grew on this spot was used to bake bricks and now there is the possibility of using what is under the old roots for the same type of manufacturing although the bricks today are baked by oil or gas fires and not the old fashioned cord wood.

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

## of
## Olde Middleborough
## in
## Plymouth County
## Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

13 March 1975

In 1836 a Resolve of the Legislature of Massachusetts stated that the "Compact with the Charter and Laws of the Colony of New Plymouth; together with the Confederation of the United Colonies of New England and Other Valuable Documents" be published agreeably to a resolve passed April 5, 1836 under the supervision of William Brigham, Counsellor at Law.

This book is not a complete record of each and every law but a selection of the more interesting laws enacted during the early history of the Plymouth Colony. Many of the laws are quite general in nature and refer to the entire colony but there is one cited on page 201 which relates specifically to Middleborough . . . as follows:

Year 1683 . . . "This Court doth order that Swansey and Middlebery (Middleborough) shall chose some for Officers To Lead theire Milletary Companies and Instruct them in Marshall disiplyne and that orders to each of those Townes to send such to the Court as they shall see Cause to choose."

Middleborough, being one of the towns of Plymouth Colony was, of course, subject to any and all laws enacted by the Legislature. We hear a great deal today regarding the exporting of American products such as wheat to foreign countries . . . but did you know that in 1626 the following statute was in effect in Plymouth Colony?

"It was ordained the sd 29 of March 1626: for the preventing scarcity as alsoe for the furthering of our trade that no corne beans or pease be transported, imbarqued or sold to that end to be conveyed out of the colony without the leave and licence of the governour and cousell. The breach whereof to be punished with los of the goods so taken or proved to be sold: and the seller further fined or punished or both at the discression of the Govr and Councill."

In 1633 the Legislature recognized the danger of forest fires and the following law was placed on the Colony records:

"That whereas many have sustayned great damage by the indiscreet fyring of the woods, It is by these prnt (present) order forbidden to any to set fire of them between the moneth of September and the moneth of March."

"And that whatsoever damag cometh to any by the breach of this order to be made good by the delinquent. Also whensoever any are justly occasioned to fire the same at any other time they shall give warning thereof to the neighbors about them." In 1638 the law was revised to read "except betweene the first day of the month of February and the middest of the month of April."

In 1669 Middleborough was established as a town and was, thereby, subject to the many laws which already appeared in the records of Plymouth Colony.

It was at this period that a law was enacted which today affords only a bit of amazement at the amount of control of individual activity which the governing elders of Plymouth County exercised.

"It is enacted by the Court that any pson (person) or psons that shalbe found smoking of Tobacco on the Lords day; going too or coming from the meetings within two miles of the meeting house shall pay twelve pence for every such default to the Collonies use."

At about this same time . . . 1665-1675 . . . laws began to appear on the books which in one way or another related to the Indians . . . what they could or could not do. Many of them were far more in favor of the white colonist than in favor of the Indian. A person selling "beer" to an Indian was fined five shillings for every quart sold and the Indian "found distempered with drinke" shall be whipped. It is small wonder that the settlers and Indians found it a bit difficult to fully understand each other and to 'keep the peace.'

In 1673 this statute appears on the books . . . "And what horses or horse kind soever doe or shall treaspas any in theire Corne or other enclosed lands or meddowes after warning given; if they continew soe to treaspas It shalbe lawfull for the pson (person) soe trespased to kill them."

In 1675 the Colony officials appointed to run the lines between the several towns and the following statement refers to Middleborough . . . "Also the Court have ordered and impounded the above named Mr. Constat Southworth and William Paybody to run the line between Bridgwater and Middlebery Incase of the Treasurers neglect that then Nathaniell Thomas Leiftenant Morton and John Thompson to supply." Even today, here in Middleborough, there are three men who are considered appointed officials and their title is fence viewers. It is their responsibility to "walk the bounds" of our town . . . or as some records state "perambulate the boundaries."

In 1689 Middlebury (Middleborough) was assessed 14£ as its share in financing the war.

The GI loans and other considerations extended to veterans had its early counterparts in this 1676 law. "The Court have ordered That the necke of land called Showamett (Shawmut) shalbe sold the prise (price) whereof to be improved for the releiffe of mained (maimed) soldiers and others that are in great nessesitie in our Collonie whose Povertie hath bin caused by the late warr; as alsoe for the defraying of such just debts as the Country stands engaged unto any."

In 1677 a law was passed requiring the establishment of a grammar School in every town where fifty or more families lived and each town was required to raise 12£ for the upkeep of the school. The statute is quite lengthy and detailed in stating conditions for establishing and maintaining the said schools.

It was in 1682 that a lengthy law was passed regarding town bounds and in this law it was set forth "And that in every towne the towne or Celectmen appoint two or three psons (persons) whoe on notice given to or by the Adjacent Townes shall once in every two or three years goe to the bounds between them to view and renew theire bound which shalbe a heap of stones or a trench of six foot long a foot and an half deep and two foot wide upon paine of five pounds for every towne that shall neglect the same; and that each propriator of lands in any Common feild or lying unfenced that shall not once in the yeer or in two yeer; on warning given him by his naighbour attend the meeting to keep up the bounds betwixt them which shalbe sufficient meet stones shall forfeite ten shillings for such default; the one halfe to the pty (party) moveing and the other halfe to the Country and that two or three men shalbe appointed by each Towne to deside the controversy or difference between the naighbours or between the Towne and any of the Inhabitants about the bounds of theire lands; saveing to the greived pty (party) his remedy in law."

As the years went by new laws were made, old laws were re-written, old laws revoked or became outmoded and inactive . . . but all served their purpose in establishing the county of Plymouth and the towns within the county.

## DEPOT GROVE 1890-1900

by Rose Standish Pratt

Recently Clint Clark took a picture of "Pulpit Rock" in Depot Grove and told about conditions there at the present time. This made us think of the happy events held in the Grove in "By Gone Years."

Many people walked to the Grove to sit in the shade, to watch the trains as they glided under the train sheds at the depot. It was only a few steps from the Grove to the Depot platform to meet friends who might come from Cape Cod, Fall River, Providence, Boston, or Plymouth. Those were the days of excellent train service in and out of Middleboro.

How many recall the circus tents pitched in the field side of the Grove? Elephants paraded around and the sound of wild animals echoed through the trees as lions and tigers and monkeys paced back and forth in their cages while waiting for food.

At one time delicious clambakes were served in the Grove. At another time baseball dominated the field. During these events Depot Grove seemed like a park for fun and entertainment.

Very happy memories of my childhood are centered around the Sunday afternoon services held every week during July and August. People sat on wooden benches with no back to lean against. The lovely tree tops shaded us from the sun. The minister stood on "Pulpit Rock" from whence he conducted the service. An organ was brought from the home of the Honorable Albert Washburn on Southwick Street and Miss Carrie Eaton, a distinguished music teacher, was the organist.

Mr. Frank Woodward distributed the Gospel hymn books. Mr. Woodward and Mr. Albert Roberts of the Y.M.C.A. were responsible for many of the plans and arrangements. The first fifteen minutes of the service were devoted to singing and I remember a very popular hymn was, "A Shelter in the Time of Storm." How all the voices filled the entire Grove with lovely music!

The services were well attended by very friendly people. My parents attended but I usually went along early with my grandmother Standish. When we reached the Grove, we would find her friend, Mrs. Abbie Soule, who lived on Southwick Street. She would have her granddaughter, Abbie Lucas, who was about my age. While our grandmothers visited together, Abbie and I walked about enjoying ourselves until three o'clock when the singing began. Then we sat under the watchful eyes of our grandmothers, who were concerned about our behavior. There was strict discipline in those days!

Those Sunday afternon meetings were very popular and anticipated from week to week. It was always nice to look forward to.

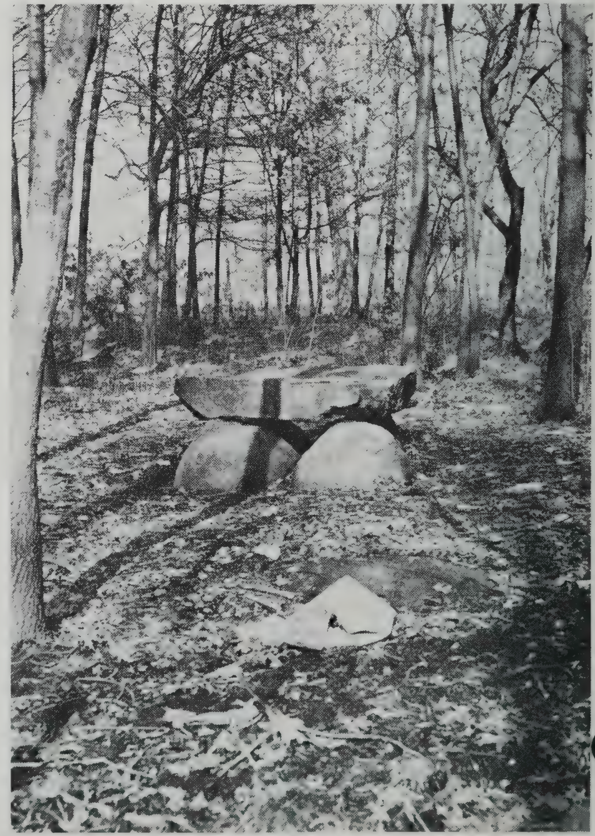


*Photo by Clint Clark*

**"PULPIT ROCK"**
**DEPOT GROVE**

## THE FIRST ROLLING-MILL IN AMERICA

by William H. Harrison,
Braintree, Mass.

*There have been included in the Antiquarian several articles about Oliver Mill. Since it is Middleboro's most historic spot and since the site is to have a prominent place in the town's observance of the Bicentennial of our country, it seems worthwhile to reprint a portion of this pamphlet presented to the Middleborough Historical Museum by Mr. and Mrs. G. Ward Stetson. The paper was presented at the first regular meeting of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, at Hartford, Connecticut,* 1881.

The accompanying drawings are plan and elevation of the machinery of a rolling-mill, built at Middleboro, Massachusetts, for Peter Oliver, one of the Crown Justices in the Province, and a brother of Andrew Oliver, the Lieutenant-Governor, in the year 1751. They possess no scientific interest, but it is perhaps proper for representatives of mechanical science in this country, at this, their first meeting in New England, to put on record some account of the work of the mechanics of this section in the olden time.

We have no reliable information as to who the man was, who did the actual planning, or the mechanical execution of this mill. The great man, who made the money was Judge Peter Oliver, and his name has been handed down to us in the local histories, more on account of his political connections than his knowledge of ironworks.

It is probable, from the fact of his being a native of Birmingham in Old England, that he had some knowledge of the processes carried on in that locality. At the time this mill was built, there was a law prohibiting the making, importing, or using of machinery for rolling or splitting iron in the colonies, in order that the home manufacturers could control the American market. Subsequent events have somewhat modified the force of this prohibition! But Judge Oliver, in consequence of his political connections, was granted a special privilege to import and use this machinery. Hence it is supposed that this is the first rolling-mill erected on this continent. In the spring of 1776 Judge Oliver, along with a good many other of the loyal residents of Boston, went on board a British war-vessel, and sailed for England. The mill, by confiscation and sale, passed into other hands, and was kept in operation with varying success until 1830, when it was abandoned. The business of the mill was to roll down the hammered bars made at the charcoal forges — one of which was Leonard's Forge, built in the year 1651 — into bars about 3 x ¾" and to slit them into nail rods of about 3/16" width, there being no such things as cut nails previous to 1818. There was then the rolling-mill and slitter, as shown. The bottom roll of the rolling-mill was driven by an undershot waterwheel, 18 feet in diameter with 10 feet face, at the left hand side, and the bottom roll of the slitter by a similar wheel at the right hand side, eight feet further up the stream. The top roll of the mill was driven by a counter shaft and 8 foot cog wheel shaft, gearing into a similar cog wheel on the right-hand water-wheel shaft, and the top roll of the slitter by a similar gearing to the left-hand water-wheel shaft. The speed could be equalized between top and bottom rolls by raising or lowering the gates a trifle, until the bars would come through without turning up or down. The shear was operated by a wrought-iron lever, which was lifted up by a cam upon the water-wheel shaft, as shown in plan. The roll-stands consisted of bed-plates, as shown, each with four wrought-iron posts, 5" diameter, keyed below the bolsters, forming the top and bottom supports for the necks or journals of the rolls, were all cast from the same pattern, with a hole at each end by which they could be slipped over the columns and cobbled up with blocks and wedges, in the manner familiar to rolling-mill men. The rolls were tightened or loosened by driving the long keys at the top of the columns. The rolls were 36" long, 15" in diameter at the ends, which were chilled. The necks were 9" in diameter. The iron was reduced in four passes from ¾ x 3" to ¼ x 3". The spindles were of wrought iron, 5½" square. The water-wheels, cog-wheels, and shafts were of wood with cast-iron gudgeons running in timber-boxes. The head of water in the flumes was about ten feet, and the speed of the wheels about fifteen revolutions per minute. The iron was received from the forges in bars, 3" x ¾" x 8'. These were sheared into three lengths, heated in the furnace with a fire of pine sticks, and then rolled and slitted into the nail-rods. In the year 1818 Captain Zenas Crooker was the manager. About eight men were employed, at about $1 a day; six heats, of about eight hundred pounds each, were made in twelve hours' running. One pint of rum was consumed for each heat, or more, according to the weather. The value of the forge-iron was $100 per ton; nail-rods, $120; and nails 12½ cents, or nine pence per pound. The nail-rods were put up in bundles of fifty-six pounds, and the nailers, who had their little shops around in the country, were expected to bring back fifty pounds of headed and pointed nails, receiving "store pay" of calico, tea, rum, molasses, etc.

About the year 1818, Jesse Reed of Kingston, Massachusetts, brought out the machine for cutting nails, in pretty much the same form as it exists today. This did away with the old business of slitting, except for horseshoe nail rods; but the old mill was kept running, making flat plates from which the nails were cut across the bar, the forge-iron being of such good quality as to admit of this treatment. Improvements in rolling followed, the timber fuel got scarce, and the old mill was abandoned and wrecked, so that today there is nothing left but the recollection of a survivor, which I have endeavored to put into tangible shape. The drawing was made under the supervision of S. Wilder, Esq., of New Castle, Pennsylvania, a retired iron manufacturer, who worked in the mill in 1818, and gave the writer the principal dimensions in feet and inches, and the method of operating. As to whether the mill, in the year 1818, was precisely the one built in 1751, Mr. Wilder states that it is likely that there had been some renewals of the wood-work, but most of the iron-work was the original. It was impossible to break down the mill, from the fact that, if a heavy piece or a pair of tongs were passed in, the effect would be, after some squeaking of the timber-wheels, to stop everything.

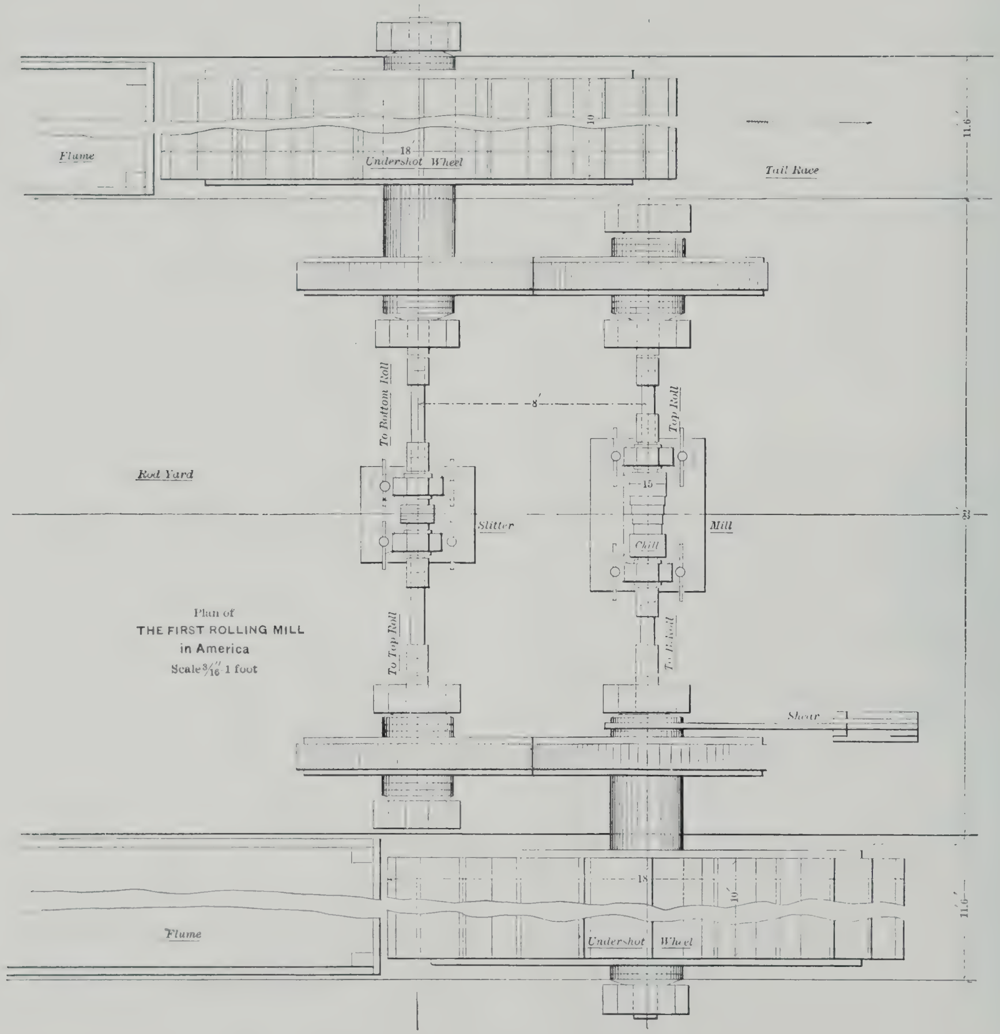
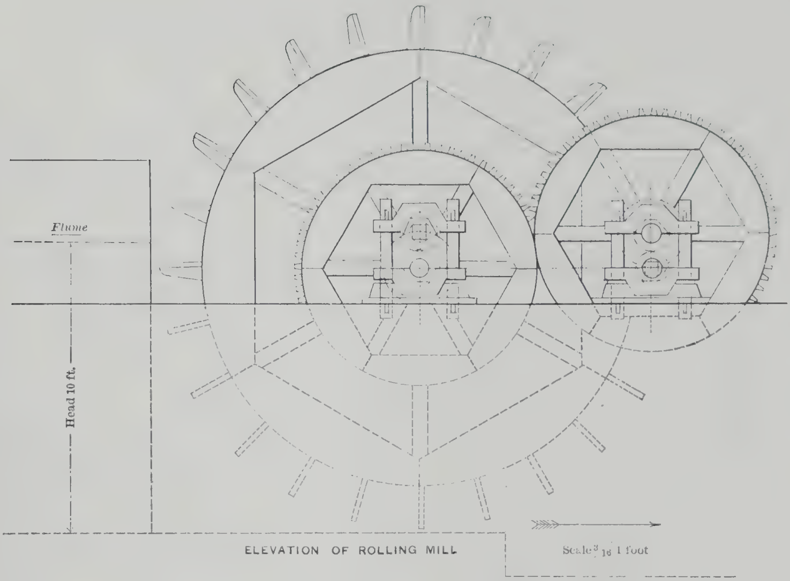
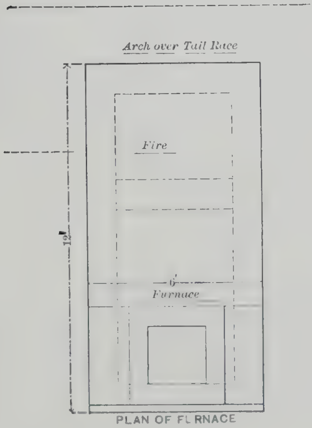

Flume
18
10
Undershot Wheel
Tail Race
11.6'
8'
To Bottom Roll
Top Roll
Rod Yard
Slitter
15
Chill
Mill
Plan of
THE FIRST ROLLING MILL
in America
Scale 3/16" - 1 foot
To Top Roll
To B. Roll
Shear
18
10
11.6'
Flume
Undershot Wheel

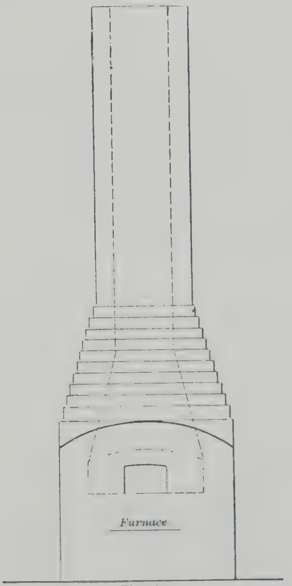
Diagram of First Rolling Mill in America Built for Judge Peter Oliver in 1751.


Flume
Head 10 ft.
Scale 3/16 1 foot

ELEVATION OF ROLLING MILL


Arch over Tail Race
Fire
12'
6'
Furnace

PLAN OF FURNACE



*Elevation*

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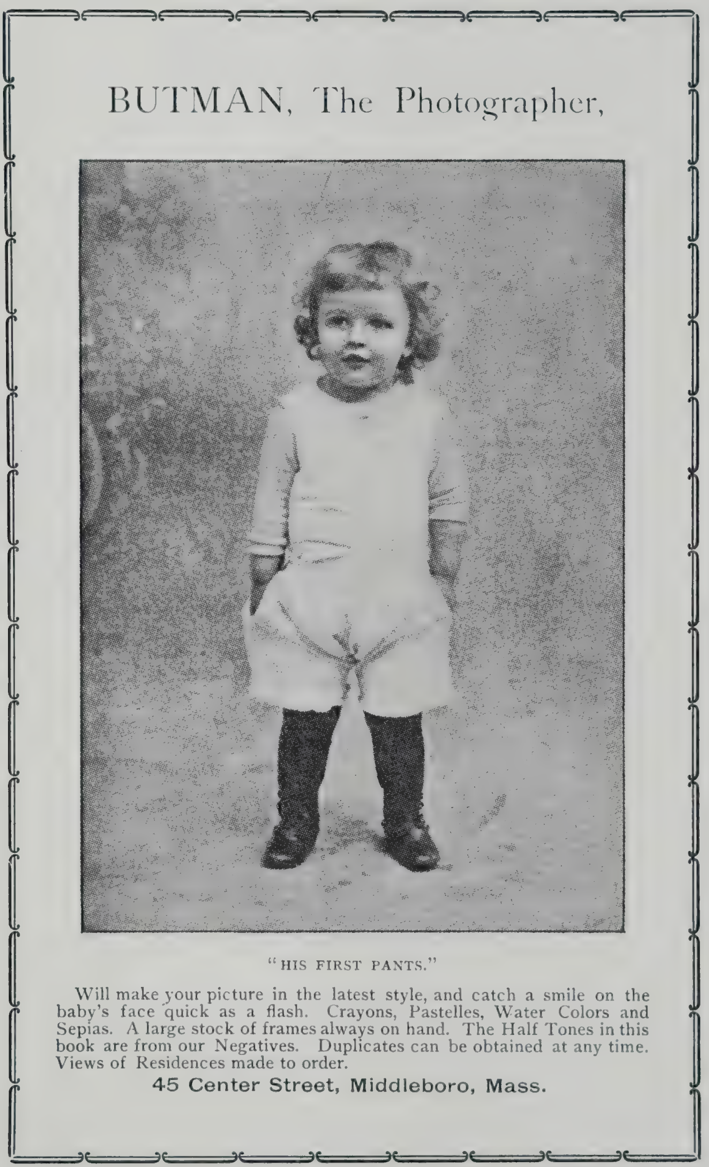
VOLUME XVI AUGUST 1975 NUMBER 4



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The subject of this enchanting photograph was Lysander Richmond, known to his playmates as "Sannie." The picture was probably taken about 1896 when Sannie was three years old. Sannie's mother was Cora Richmond and his aunt Grace Peirce, both well known singers. Mr. Butnam opened his photography studio in the Peirce Block on Center Street in 1891.

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## THE RIOT OF JULY 4TH, 1903

In the early 1900's, the night before the Fourth was celebrated in a far different manner than is the custom today. Then the Four Corners were filled with crowds, bent on finding excitement. Boys threw firecrackers and torpedoes out among the crowd, which caused much screeching and screaming but no one seemed to get seriously burned. The mob would surge from the Four Corners to Everett Square and back again. There was almost always a bonfire in progress, fed by barrels and often with carriages stolen from the Nemasket House or somebody's barn. Without fail, at least one vacant house or barn went up in flames. Residents took in all lawn and porch furniture; nothing was safe the night before the Fourth.

But the most exciting night of all, the night before the Fourth of 1903, proved violence was not unknown even then. The Boston Globe of July 5th carried startling headlines:

### MOBS RAGE AT MIDDLEBORO

### UNRULY CROWDS KEPT THE TOWN IN TERROR FOR HOURS

### DEPUTY'S FACE FILLED WITH POWDER WHILE GUARDING PRISONER

### TOWN HALL ATTACKED

That night there was the usual night before the Fourth crowd at the Four Corners, among them members of a group opposed to a new law and order party, known as the Reformers. At that period, there was no organized police force, only Sheriff Everett T. Lincoln and Night Officer George Hatch to see that order was maintained.

As the night wore on, the crowd became more and more unruly. After tiring of placing dynamite caps on the rails to be exploded by electric cars passing over them, a huge bonfire was ignited in the center of the Four Corners, fed by lumber taken from the site of the Public Library which was then under construction, and by carriages confiscated from nearby yards. There was evidence of drunkeness and one especially inebriated celebrator was arrested and taken to the Town Hall to be put in the lockup there.

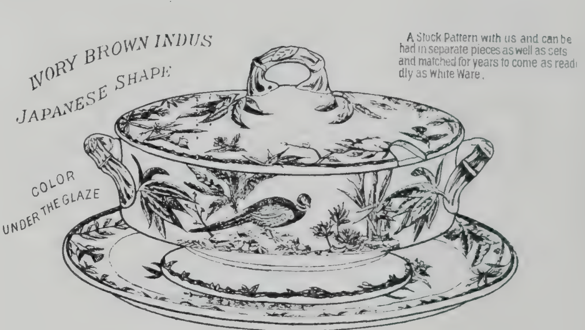
The mob resented having one of their numbers confined and began attacking the Town Hall. By 3 A.M. the riot was at its height with Sheriff Lincoln attempting to hold the Town Hall door against the surging rioters. Some one managed to insert a revolver in the crack of the door as it was forced open and fired, striking Sheriff Lincoln in the face. A doctor was called to treat the burns, but Mr. Lincoln carried the scars and suffered eye trouble all the rest of his life.

The gang then went wild, breaking windows and sashes and light bulbs. Finally convinced it was impossible to rescue the prisoner, the crowd moved up South Main Street to the residence of Judge Nathan Washburn. It was now 4 A.M. and Judge Washburn spoke to the crowd from his bedroom window, refusing to release the prisoner. The Judge immediately called High Sheriff H. S. Porter of Plymouth and asked for aid. The High Sheriff alerted police officers in Brockton who arrived on the eight o'clock train, no automobiles being available in those days. By this time the excitement was over. However, the visiting officers made an impressive appearance as they marched, two abreast, down Center Street to the Town Hall, arrayed in blue suits with brass buttons. They took the next train back to Brockton.

Three rioters had been arrested that night and a dozen more taken into custody later, with charges ranging from drunkeness to rioting and assault on a policeman. Some were dismissed, others received sentences from two to four months in the House of Correction.

The element who caused and participated in the riot stated beforehand that their purpose was to show their opposition to the reform party then in control of town affairs, and to make the night before the Fourth memorable!

* * *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The T. W. Peirce Hardware Store was on the corner of School and Center Streets for many years, located where Benny's is at the present time. Thomas W. Peirce was grandfather to the young man on the front cover. His mother was Cora Peirce Richmond and his aunt, Grace Peirce, both singers well known locally.

* * *

## MRS. BOUCHER RESIGNS

Mrs. Alda Boucher resigned her position of treasurer after serving the Middleborough Historical Association in that office for six years. In that time membership has grown and new projects have been undertaken that required the treasurer to give a great deal of time to the office, more time than Mrs. Boucher felt she could give at present.

Mr. Kenneth Butler, Rocky Meadow Street, has consented to assume the duties of treasurer of the Association.

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XVI 1975 Number 4
Mertie E. Romaine .................... Editor

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## PEOPLE PARAGRAPHS
## or
## ROY CASWELL HAS A NEW SAXON

By Clint Clark

A unique history of the town could be written from personal and other local news briefs in The Middleboro Gazette.

It would relate little of local politics, commerce and industry, but it would be rich in notes on community life, for the focal point of "personals" is centered on people; who visited whom, who is ailing, or has recovered from illness, vacation trips, anniversary occasions, and personal accomplishments, ranging from someone putting a fresh coat of paint on his barn to scholastic and career advancement.

Although dealing with local affairs, a history comprising selected briefs from the Gazette would not exclude events of worldwide importance, if local folk were even marginally concerned, such as a paragraph in the spring of 1915, reporting the return of Miss May Eddy from the Panama Exposition.

Another of the same year, that Roy B. Caswell had disposed of his Buick roadster and bought a Saxon, would awaken the reader's memories of other grand old automobiles, either owned or admired — a Peerless, possibly, Moon, Willys-Knight, or Hupmobile. It would be a book that would bring the reader to frequent, reminiscent pauses.

In the spring of that year, 60 years ago, Lorenzo Wood, Austen Beals, and Roy Perkins made an auto trip to Eliot, Maine . . . pause here to recall the days when "motoring" was a more leisurely adventure than nerve-wracking driving on high speed modern expressways. And pause to picture the big, high-wheeled touring car, built for the enjoyment of "motoring" when 40 miles an hour was breakneck speed.

During that era, the briefs in The Gazette reflected a localized but not necessarily confining life. The enjoyment of a visit with, or by, friends has never been measured in miles. Crosstown visits were of as much interest to readers as when someone traveled to see friends in faraway places.

The changing seasons and their effects would be gathered from such items as a report from South Carver that several cranberry bogs had been sprayed "because of the gypsy moths." Gardeners would be interested in reports of early returns; a farmer picking strawberries the first week in June — peas coming in a week earlier than the previous year.

Thus the writers of local briefs contributed to the recording of history. Country correspondents were, and are, usually, housewives acquainted with every one of their neighbors and who earned pin money either by personal calls to pick up newsy tidbits or over the phone.

Personal briefs in small town weekly newspapers are pure "Americana." We, the readers, know that our everyday lives are not grand processions from one glorious event to the next. The life we live is a mosiac of small parts. But when shared through the pages of the local weekly, they are as newsworthy as a city daily's coverage of a steel workers' strike in Pittsburg — more so, because they are about people we know — personally.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN

The Executive Board of the Middleborough Historical Association voted as a part of the observance of the Bicentennial to issue a booklet entitled, "Highlights of the Middleborough Antiquarian." The book, bound in attractive green covers, includes twenty articles published in the past sixteen years in volumes One through Sixteen of the Antiquarian. The preface sets forth the purpose of the publication:

The following articles were selected from "The Middleborough Antiquarian" . . . the publication of the Middleborough Historical Association, Inc.

The Antiquarian Committee feels that these highlights taken from the last sixteen years of "The Middleborough Antiquarian" are a fitting salute to the American Revolution Bicentennial.

The selection committee hopes you will enjoy these articles which are representative of all the interesting material offered to the members of The Middleborough Historical Association through the pages of "The Antiquarian."

Mildred L. Ashley
Edna W. Townsend
Mertie E. Romaine, *Chairman*

Mr. Charles D. Townsend donated his time to arrange the contents and produce the finished book.

The book will be on sale at the Middleborough Historical Museum, priced at two dollars a copy. If mailed, the price will be $2.50 to cover cost of handling and postage.

### New Members — June, 1974 - June, 1975

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

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in

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by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

No community is an entirety unto itself. Each town or city has at one time or another been a part of some other area and boundaries have changed to indicate the surrendering or acquisition of land. Middleborough is no exception. Frequently these additions and subtractions to a town's area reflect also the changes in resident families in the area.

The earlier settlers in Middleborough came here from Plymouth and this is the reason why so many of the old Middleborough families have Mayflower ancestry. Middleborough's first minister, the Rev. Samuel Fuller was ordained in 1694 . . . although he came here to preach about 1675, the exact date is not known. The Rev. Samuel was the son of the good doctor, a passenger on the Mayflower. Elizabeth Brewster married the Rev. Samuel Fuller and thereby gave a double lineage to their descendants.

In 1719 a second precinct was formed in the southwest part of town including a part of Taunton. And in 1741 another precinct was formed in the northwest part of town and this included a part of Bridgewater. About this same date a fourth precinct in the Titicut section of town. With each of these new areas came different families to live within the bounds of Middleborough. Today our local names of the older streets reflect the presence of these early settlers.

Names given to children of these early families also indicated their heritage. Surnames used as given names frequently reflect an intermarriage between families. Sometimes if you are tracing a family this can be a clue.

Many references in the early records do not make any reference to Middleborough but refer to Nemasket and it was also known as Middlebery . . . sometimes it is spelled as Middlebury. This is usually indicative of the town clerk's or recorder's ability to spell rather than a change in the accepted spelling.

When reading history of an area you become aware of the changes in place names and of the boundaries and you find it easy to associate the structural changes of the town with the various name changes.

Familiarity with names of the early families often associates them with a certain area of a town. As everyone knows it is the men of the family who carry down the family name from one generation to the next. A surname can become lost to an area in only one or two generations if the family consists of all girls and no boys.

Listed as a member of the first militia of 'olde Nemasket' or Middleborough was one Zebedee Pratt who served as drummer. In endeavoring to identify this man I learned that serving in the Middleborough militia helped to establish his whereabouts both during the Revolution and later. The published Pratt genealogies do not list a Zebedee in their indexes.

However, a check of the Middleborough vitals reveals that a Phineas Pratt and wife Sarah (White) Pratt of Middleborough had a son Zebedee born the 16th of July 1744. Zebedee married in 1765, recorded both in Middleborough and Bridgewater, a girl named Dordana Keith who was called of Bridgewater. This is the only Zebedee Pratt who appears in the Middleborough records.

The dates are reasonable . . . that is the ages of 16 to 65 for militia enrollment puts this Zebedee Pratt within the proper age bracket. We do not find that any Zebedee Pratt ever applied for a Revolutionary pension . . . nor has his service record been used by any descendant for DAR membership. Yet he served as shown by his war service record . . . "drummer, Capt Nathaniel Wood's (1st Middleborough) co. of militia, which marched in response to the alarm of April 19, 1775, to Marshfield; service, 2 days; also, Private Capt. William Tupper's (6th) co. (train band and alarm co. of Middleborough), Col. Sproutt's Regt.; service 5 days; company marched to Rhode Island on the alarm of Dec. 8, 1776; also Capt. William Tupper's co., Col. Ebenezer Sprout's regt.; enlisted May 6; discharged May 9; enlisted Sept. 6; discharged Sept. 12; service 9 days; company marched from Middleborough to Dartmouth on two alarms in 1778; also, same company and regt.; marched Aug. 1, 1780; discharged Aug. 9, 1780; service, 9 days; company marched to Rhode Island on the alarm of Aug. 1, 1780."

With no such thing as a standing army or career soldiers and a definite minority of men who enlisted 'for the duration' in contrast to the armies in our later wars . . . the War of the Revolution is even more of a great victory for the colonists.

The fact that Zebedee Pratt saw service in Rhode Island may indicate that he is the same Zebedee who has a son Aberdeen who marries on 8 April 1785 at Foster, Rhode Island, a Lydia Pratt. The early Bridgewater Keiths were descendants of the Rev. James Keith of Scotland who preached in Bridgewater. This could be a very logical explanation for naming a son, Aberdeen. It is not conclusive proof however. Further research would need to be done on both the Keith and Pratt lines before declaring this a proof-positive line.

Phineas Pratt and his wife Sarah (White) Pratt had four children born in Middleborough, the other three being a son, Abner, a daughter Ruth and a daughter Hannah who probably became the wife of Capt. Benjamin Leonard.

The early settlers did far more travelling that extended into other towns than we realize. This factor coupled with the give-and-take in establishing town boundaries over the years has meant that descendants of many early families can be found in several different towns prior to 1800. The miles of Indian paths were used by both the Indian and the white man.

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## OLD WARRENTOWN

### Business Locations

By Lyman Butler

Every once in a while I will pick up the Weston History of Middleboro and open it at random and read awhile about whatever is on the pages but it is not long before I turn to the part of the book which tells about the places where I used to live as a young one. The one that I have just been reading about is the Warrentown section of town. Having spent my early childhood in that section I remember many of the spots mentioned.

As there are many people who have not read the history I would like to tell of a few of the industries which were carried on in the Warrentown section of long ago. As the history starts with the Murdock Street area of the Nemasket River so will I. Here was built a grist mill, a shingle mill and a saw mill, all operated by water power. These were built and maintained by Mr. John Warren, a great grandson of Jabez Warren who the locality was named after. Some of the walls of the old mills are still in existence. The old home of John Warren was still in existence when I was young, later it burned. This was known as the John Weston house and was located on the spot where Henry Dutra lives now. The present house was built by Jack McNeece who many remember as working for the registry of motor vehicles in later years. According to history where Snow's Bog is now, used to be a reservoir for water power to operate the hammer shop which was owned by Benj. Warren. The shop where the shovels were made was the building which housed Primo's Pastime when I was a youngster. It is now a dwelling house. The flume and sluiceway of the hammer shop are still in use for controlling the water on the Cranberry Bog known as Snow's Bog.

On the knoll of the Snow place was a carriage shop operated by Venus and Otis Snow, father of Henry who us kids used to know as youngsters. When he passed away his son William carried on the bog for some years. The old carriage shop was used as a screen house and storage for the berries. This building has been gone for years and there is nothing to remind you of a once thriving business in this spot.

The James and Sylvanus Bump family used to operate a slaughter house in a building in the rear of their dwelling on Plymouth Street where Mrs. Tom Thumb was born. This business was carried on by Charles H. Shaw and his son Charles L. Shaw at the turn of the 20th Century. This building has been torn down and all that remains is the cellar hole.

The hill that we always knew as Snow's Hill got its name from the Aaron Snow family who owned the house and Wheel Wright Shop at the top of the grade, and nearly opposite this residence was the sales stable of Melzar Tribou. In the same yard was the Shoe Shop of Richard Carter and next to this the Carpenter Shop of Horatio Wilbur. Many will remember this building when the boys from Warrentown used it for a Club House.

Directly across from this shop was the Blacksmith Shop of Eber Beals. Maurice Braga lives in this venerable old house at present. There was another Blacksmith Shop at the place where Myron Turnbull lived. This was last operated by a man named Benjamin Lane. When I was young I remember the inside of this building being charred where there had been a fire which luckily had been put out before consuming the building as so many old buildings were then.

I have given you a rough idea as to what a busy place Warrentown used to be in the old days. There is no doubt but there were other small shoe shops like the one where Carol Washburn lived but the town history does not list every little business, although on the old 1855 map there are many little shoe shops listed here and there all over town.

This may not mean much to a lot of people but anyone who lived in Warrentown fifty or sixty years ago will well remember many of the buildings which housed some of these business ventures.

## THE BOSTON PRESS REACTION TO THE BOSTON MASSACRE

by Edward M. Pratt

*This paper was written by Mr. Pratt for a course at Dartmouth College entitled, "The Age of the American Revolution." While the subject has no specific relation to Middleboro, the Boston Press must have greatly influenced the thinking of all New England.*

---

> *In establishing American independence, the pen and the press had a merit equal to that of the sword.*
>
> David Ramsay,
> *The History of the American Revolution* (Phila. 1789), II 319

During its colonial history, Boston had never been a complacent city. Rather, when the colonies in America suffered from British restrictions on either politics or economics, Boston was in the forefront of colonial opposition. And indeed, when Great Britain levied its Townshend Duties in the American colonies in 1767 to help defray the costs of American defense, the city of Boston led the resistance to them. So vehement were Boston's protests against these new taxes that British leaders thought it necessary to send two British regiments to Boston in order to enforce them and insure order.

Predictably, the presence of British soldiers in Boston was greatly resented by Bostonians, who saw the British military presence as continuing evidence of English tyranny and oppression. Public opposition to the troops was extremely high, and resulted in two near riots during July and October of 1769. On March 2nd, 1770 a fight erupted between Boston artisans and sailors and British soldiers. Open violence seemed inevitable as neither side would compromise.

The violence came on March 5th, 1770. Led by Crispus Attucks, a sailor and former slave, a group of fifty to sixty men began to taunt and jeer a British sentry in front of the British Customs House, seat of the hated British economic policy. Verbally insulted and physically attacked with snowballs and other debris, the sentry called for help. Captain William

Preston finally came with a small detachment of troops after two such calls, in order to relieve the beleagured sentry. This British force then became the new object of the mob's projectiles. A free-for-all resulted, shots were fired and three colonials were killed, including Crispus Attucks. Eight other townsmen were wounded, two of these died later.

Thus, the "Boston Massacre" was not a massacre at all, but a street fight provoked by a Boston mob. Nevertheless, Boston leaders were not about to let such a valuable incident escape them, and called a town meeting to discuss their plan of action. The result of this meeting was the twin demand for the withdrawal of all British troops from Boston, and for the trial of Captain Preston and his men for murder. In order to prevent further violence, Massachusetts Governor Thomas Hutchinson withdrew the British soldiers to an island fort in Boston Harbor, and arrested Preston and six other soldiers to be held for trial. Defended by John Adams and Josiah Quincy, Captain Preston was acquitted. Later, in a separate trial, four of the others were also acquitted. The other two British soldiers were convicted of manslaughter and were dismissed from the army after having been branded on the hand.[1]

As a general rule, Boston newspapers published their editions on Monday. Since the Massacre occurred on a Monday night, the papers didn't cover it until their following edition on March 12th. The six day delay was most helpful to patriot leaders as it gave them extra time to sharpen their attacks on the British.

When the papers did finally come out, their actual coverage was relegated to the back pages of the paper, just after the news fresh from England, and just before advertising by local merchants and artisans. Predictably, what each story related strongly reflected the respective editor-in-chief's political philosophy as well as that of his financial contributors. In truth, the Boston Massacre was the first instance which the press played up in order to condemn the presence of British troops in Boston and British policy in general.[2]

The *Boston Evening Post* was one of the more impartial reporters of the Massacre. Traditionally, the *Post* had reserved its activities to simple factual reporting.[3] The patriot fanatic, Sam Adams, had been a contributor to the *Post,* but in general, its editors had maintained a fair and objective attitude towards the worsening situation in Boston. In its coverage of the Massacre, it maintained this neutral polity to an amazing degree. But it too was still swayed by the public furor.

The *Post* laid equal blame on the British soldiers and the Boston mob for the actual starting of trouble. But it squarely condemned the British for firing, reporting Captain Preston as having ordered "Damn you fire, be the consequence what it will!" in its March 12th issue. The *Post* ended its account of the "bloddy massacre" with eight, small, black corpses at the bottom of the page and the eulogy:

> ". . . long as in FREEDOM'S Cause wise contend,
> Dear to your country shall your fame extend.
> While to the world, the lettered stone shall tell
> How Caldwell, Attucks, Gray and Maverick fell."

On March 19th, the *Boston Evening Post* printed private letters that invariably blamed the British for the Massacre. It was seen by these writers as a direct result of the British military presence in Boston. Get the troops out and there would be no more trouble. "What destation and abhorrence must be raised in every breath against standing armies in times of peace" to avoid the "state of bondage and ruin" brought by excessive power. So cried the letters to the *Post* for weeks. And on the 2nd of April, the *Evening Post* reprinted an article from the *New Hampshire Gazette* decrying the

> ". . . shedding of BLOOD of innocent Americans . . . by the execrable hands of the diabolical tools of Tyrants!"

So wrote the *New Hampshire Gazette* and the *Evening Post* as they agitated for vengeance. "Where is our English liberty?" asked 'Consideration' in a letter appearing in the same issue.

Similarly, the *Boston Post Boy* in its March 12th edition, maintained a cautious reporting stance on the actual facts of the massacre, preferring to wait until proven facts were ascertained.[4] The *Post Boy* gave the shooting third page billing, but contrary to its usually neutral policy, could not avoid castigating the "British Bullys" and ending its account with the admonition that the time had been reached when "the inhabitants and soldiers can no longer live together in safety." Following the general rule, the *Post Boy* could not avoid placing the blame for the deaths of the Boston men on the presence of English troops within Boston and thus, squarely at the feet of British political leadership. Its solution to the problem — remove the troops.

*The Boston Chronicle* also maintained a careful posture in its coverage of the bloody affair. But following the lead of its editor, John Mein, it was decidedly pro-British in its presentaton of the facts, such as they were.[5] Mein maintained close ties with the British Customs Board, and as such, his publishing tendencies were obviously tilted in a direction favorable to the Englsh. As such, it would have been interesting to observe its role as a voice in defense of the soldiers after their trial. But unfortunately, the *Chronicle* folded, partly because of intense patriotic pressure, in June of 1770, before the trials ever began.

*The Massachusetts Gazette and Boston Newsletter,* edited by Richard Draper, also leaned in the direction of the British position.[6] His paper was heavily financed by Boston tories, and was the official printer for the Governor of Massachusetts and his Council. It is thus easy to understand why its account on March 8th simply presented the facts with little embellishment. This edition did call the deaths of the Boston men the result of British "murder", but only labeled it as "unfortunate", refusing to employ the damning adjectives favored by other publishers.

The March 15th issue of the same paper included more accounts of the massacre, replete with four black coffins with white skulls and cross-bones on them and initials of the dead men. This same paper carried letters to the editor concerning recent events, but all were far less vehement and were more moderate in turn. It concluded its report with the observation that

> "It is supposed that there must have been a greater number of people . . . at the funeral of those massacred by the soldiers than were ever together on this continent on any occasion."

It was left to the *Boston Gazette* to provide the most extensive and inflammatory coverage of the Boston Massacre. The Gazette was the best of the patriot-oriented newspapers and was closely allied and in constant touch with Sam Adams and other Boston radicals.[7] The Massacre afforded the *Gazette* with its first hard issue since the Stamp Act, and it was not going to miss out on such a fantastic opportunity to hurt the British. It also provided the most interesting coverage.

The *Gazette's* first account appeared in its March 12th edition. Bordered by heavy black lines, and utilizing Paul Revere's engraving of the four coffins with initials and death heads, the *Gazette* started by asserting that British troops were in Boston to "quell the Spirit of Liberty." Violence was the natural result of this oppression, and the *Gazette* delighted in the opposition from the mob. On March 19th, it carried a letter from the committee of Boston that echoed its own sentiments. In part, the letter read:

> "the situation (massacre) was occasioned by the exorbitancy of the Military Power, which, in Consequence of the Intrigues of wicked and designing men intend to bring us into a state of Bondage and Ruin in direct Repugnance to those Rights which belong to us as men and British subjects."

Such rhetoric was typical of this Whiggishly aligned paper. And when the fifth man died from wounds sustained during the riot, the *Gazette* ran a new black casket with all the trimmings to keep the issue alive.

And the issue did stay alive for a time. But since the trials of the soldiers had been delayed until the fall so that passions could cool down, the furor over the Boston Massacre did subside until the trials were over. With the acquittal of Preston and four of his men, and the minimal punishment awarded to the other two, the outrage started anew. It was after this that the Boston press really came alive. Now they turned their presses in the direction of a political victory, since they couldn't win a legal one. To win this political victory, they turned to the people with the full force of their propaganda. The press attempted to control the actions of the people indirectly by controlling their attitudes.[8]

To accomplish this political victory, personally written letters to the various editors became the main weapon. To be sure, other mediums of communication such as the broadside tavern discussion and public meetings were also used. But the newspaper was the most important and most powerful device for such a purpose, if only because it was consistently and continually available to a large percentage of the population and because its format conveniently lent itself to ongoing argument. In particular, the *Boston Gazette* and the *Boston Evening Post* devoted a large amount of space to the trials, and are the most interesting, both in terms of their response and coverage.

None other than Sam Adams was the champion of the Patriot propaganda program. Using the *Gazette* as his microphone, he argued for six weeks in consecutive editions that there had been a "miscarriage of justice."[9] On December 17th, 1770, Adams, writing as "Vindex", utilized virtually the entire front page of the *Gazette* to recount the historical facts of the "carnage" and "savage barbarity" that had transpired on King Street on March 5th. In the December 24th issue, Vindex' writing covered the entire front page and half of the second to place all blame directly on the attitude and belligerance of the British. On the 31st Adams and his Vindex series were relegated to the second page, but still the *Gazette* published one and one half pages of his writing, which in this issue, sought to portray British officers in a conspiracy to murder Boston citizens and British soldiers eager to comply.

On January 7th, Adams took one and one half pages to attack witnesses at the trial and cast aspersions on their credibility. It is interesting to note that the *Boston Gazette* provided its readers with actual testimony and "facts" from the court record in footnote form at the bottom of its pages. And on the 14th, Vindex took the whole conduct of the trial to task. and attacked the continuing presence of an army in Boston. These two issues also carried other letters from local citizens, some agreeing with Adams and his Vindex series, others attacking him and defending the court's verdict.

Adams continued his series of attacks in the January 21st edition of the *Gazette,* and finally finished his series in the 28th, this time on the third page. His Vindex series maintained its venemous style to the very end, "riding cavalierly over the truth" until its conclusion.[10] Truth and accuracy were not included in Sam Adams' press retrial of the Boston Massacre. While he undoubtedly believed at least some of what he wrote, his Vindex was far more interested in perpetuating opposition to the British, their troops and their policy, that it was in the actual resolution of the Massacre itself.[11] Adams wanted a scapegoat, and he had been provided with one. He was determined to make as much political mileage out of it as he could: "Sam Adams . . . was determined to make the Boston Massacre an enduring symbol of British 'tyranny' ".[12]

As Adams worked toward that end with his Vindex series, he was countered point by point in issue after issue by Massachusetts Attorney General Jonathan Sewall. Writing as "Philanthrop" in the *Boston Evening Post,* Sewall refuted each of Adams' assertions from a pro-British viewpoint. Philanthrop's letters were seemingly as honest as Vindex's were exaggerated and appear to have suffered a lessened effectiveness because of it.

Outside of Boston and New England, the press tended to treat the Massacre as a matter of purely local importance. The *New York Journal* and the *New York Gazette* are prime examples of the cautious approach taken by many. Their accounts were concise and restrained, and avoided using the word "massacre" or similarly provoking words. An exception to this rule was the *Pennsylvania Gazette* which echoed the story of its *Boston Gazette* counterpart. In general, however, colonial newspapers were hesitant to become too deeply embroiled in the controversy, not wanting to worsen the situation in their own area, or risk incurring the wrath of the local British administration. The logic was devastatingly simple for them: why push their luck over an issue of importance only to Boston? The Boston response that, on the contrary, the issue of standing armies in America were of inter-colonial importance failed to win many friends.[13]

Boston press consideration of the Massacre did not end with Vindex or Philanthrop. On February 11th, Philalethes sought to reopen the issue of British guilt in the *Boston Gazette.* And on March 4th, the *Gazette* ran an anniversary discussion of the "facts" of the Massacre, as well as an examination of its implications. On March 11th, 1771, the *Boston Gazette* devoted its front page to a special memorial to the men killed by the British a year previously. Bordered by black lines, the account remembered those "inhumanly murdered" on that March 5th, and again called for vengeance. Other papers such as the new *Massachusetts Spy* and the *Essex Gazette* of Salem joined in similar commemoration of the anniversary.

The Boston Massacre remained the primary anti-British ammunition used by the Boston Press until the Tea Act and the Boston Tea Party provided it with fresh material in 1773. What then was the effect of newspaper consideration of the Massacre? At the very least, it served to magnify what was little more than a street fight into a conspiratorial slaughter of liberty-loving Boston men, and at the same time create "folk heroes out of street loafers and hoodlums." And through its repeated and persistant reporting of the actual Massacre, the trial of the soldiers and the resulting aftermath, Boston newspapers served to fuel anti-English spirit and keep alive issues larger than a simple street brawl.

But more importantly, I think, the Boston Massacre, and its aftermath gave colonial newspapers some practice. It gave them a chance to sharpen their propaganda tools, and perfect their writing technique for future use on more crucial and important issues, not to diminish its immediate importance and significance to colonial consciousness, this then was the Massacre's greatest contribution to American independence. It honed the skills of the press for battles ahead.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Basic facts about the Boston Massacre were taken from: Frederic Kidder's *History of the Boston Massacre* (Joel Munsell, Albany, N.Y., 1870), pp. 4-46 and from John W. Shy's *Toward Lexington* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J. 1965), pp. 303-320.
2. Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution*. (The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1941), p. 150.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 228.
4. Arthur M. Schlesinger ,*Prelude to Independence* (Alred A. Knopf, New York 1958), p. 103.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
6. Davidson, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-305.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 227, 395.
8. *Ibid.*, p. xiii.
9. Schlesinger, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
10. Hiller B. Zobel, *The Boston Massacre* (W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1970), p. 299.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 301.
12. Schlesinger, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

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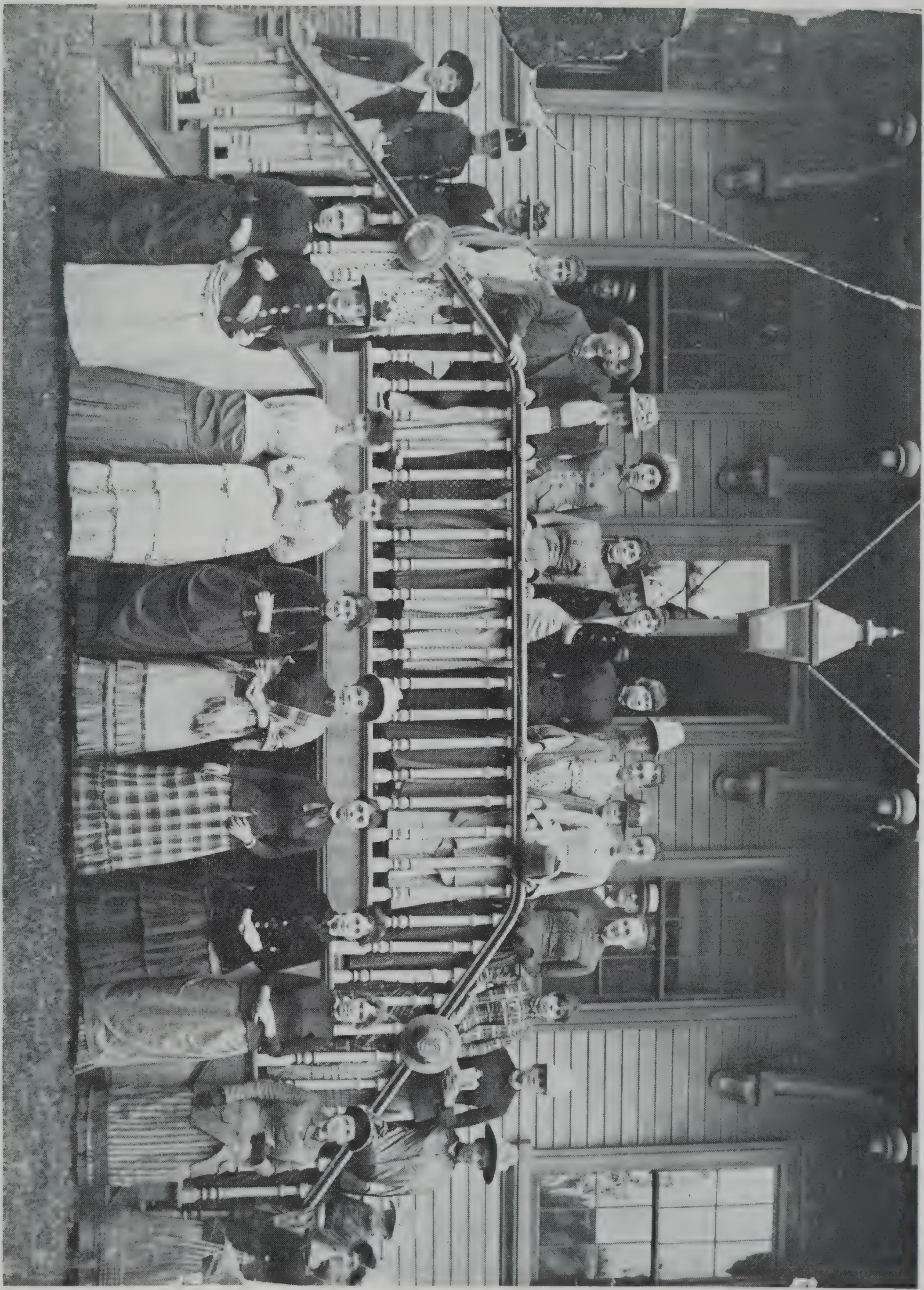

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## A CENTURY OF NAMESAKES IN THE LEONARD, THOMPSON AND PEIRCE FAMILIES

by George C. Decas

Charles F. Peirce, Jr. was the only grandson of Colonel Peter H. Peirce, and remarkably little has been written about him, considering his unique status. After all, he may well have become heir to the Peirce fortune, when his uncle, Thomas S. Peirce — the last Peirce — died in 1901. Charles was born in 1863 (about two years after the death of his grandfather) and died at the age of 31 years, unmarried. The Colonel's only other grandchild was Charles' sister, Mary Porter Peirce, who was also born after her grandfather, but died an infant.

Tracing the origin of Charles F. Peirce, Jr.'s name reveals a century of close interrelationships between three prominent local families.

Obviously, Charles Jr. was named for his father, Charles Frederick Peirce, who was the second oldest son of Colonel Peirce. Charles F. Peirce, Sr. had married Harriet Putnam, daughter of the well-beloved Reverend, Israel W. Putnam of the First Congregational Church on the Green, who had come here from a parish in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Unlike his other brothers, Charles Sr. was not involved directly in the family businesses in Middleboro, and in fact lived in Wisconsin and Illinois for awhile.

Where Colonel Peirce's son Charles actually derived his name is a more complicated question. There were several namesakes from which his name could have been adopted. I will begin with the earliest namesake that I found and let the reader determine how the name came to be.

Charles F. Leonard was born in 1796. He was the younger brother of David Augustus Leonard of Bridgewater, who one year later married Mary or Polly Peirce, the educated and attractive older sister of Colonel Peirce. In 1804 David and Polly had a son and named him Charles Frederic Leonard. These are the first two namesakes to appear in my research.

Tragedies so often lead to the perpetuation of a name, and one occurred in 1815 when the first Charles Frederic Leonard mentioned above died. He was not only the younger brother of David Augustus Leonard, but also the younger brother of Olive Thompson, who married the noted Middleboro painter, Cephas Thompson.

Caroline Leonard Goodenough describes his death as follows: ". . . a much loved boy, the baby of the flock, who died at the age of 19, two years after his father's death. How deeply mourned he was by the whole family is indicated by the naming of two nephews for him, one in the family of Cephas Thompson and the other in the family of his brother, David Augustus. Charles lies with his parents in the family lot in Mt. Prospect Cemetery. We have his careful autograph preserved on the old deed which David Leonard gave Caleb for 100 acres of the farm which Charles witnessed with his signature, although only a boy at the time." (Actually, although Mrs. Goodenough attributes the naming of David Augustus Leonard's son to this death, it is not possible since the son was born in 1804, long before his uncle's death.)

We now have Charles F. Leonard (deceased), Charles F. Leonard (son of David Augustus Leonard) and Charles F. Thompson (son of the noted Cephas Thompson). Finally, the next namesake to come along was Charles F. Peirce, who was born on September 7, 1817. However, there is an odd twist in the story. He was actually named Charles Peirce at birth (no middle name). But in 1840, by an Act of the Legislature, in which his father served some years before, Charles' name was changed to Charles Frederick Peirce or Pierce (it is spelled *both* ways in Charles' petition and the legislation enacted states "Pierce", but this spelling was never used by the family and it may be a scrivener's error). It was this name change that presents the riddle posed in the beginning of this article.

In his petition for change of name, Charles Peirce stated that there were three persons by the same name in Middleboro, all about his age, and that this created problems such as misdirected mail. But why did he choose Frederick (or Fredrick, according to the petition) as a middle name?

Cephas Thompson's son, Charles F. Thompson, died in Effingham, Georgia in 1839. Mrs. Goodenough writes that this was shortly before the completion of his college course at Amherst, but alumni records show he actually graduated in 1835 at the age of 19 years. This death occurred just four days before Charles Peirce's birthday and less than six months before Peirce sought to change his name. It seems likely to this writer that this second tragedy in our story caused Charles Peirce to adopt "Frederick" as his middle name. The timing of the name change is most persuasive. Even though Charles F. Thompson was not related to Charles Peirce, he was related to Peirce's aunt, Mary or Polly Leonard. Both Charles' were about the same age and may well have been close friends.

We cannot, however, discount the fact that Charles Peirce was born about two years after Charles F. Leonard died at the age of 19 years. Col. Peirce may have had this young man in mind when he named his own son Charles. Nor can we ignore the fact that Col. Peirce might have had his own nephew in mind, namely, Polly Peirce Leonard's son, or that Charles Peirce himself may have had his first cousin in mind when he added a middle name. Incidentally, David Augustus Leonard and Polly Leonard, together with their large family, moved to Indiana about the time Charles Peirce was born (1817) and David died about two years later.

It is even possible that Charles Frederick Peirce was named for two of the previously mentioned individuals, both of whom suffered early deaths: Charles F. Leonard and Charles F. Thompson.

Charles F. Peirce, Jr., Colonel Peirce's grandson, died at a young age himself many years later, in 1894. Oddly and unfortunately enough, this was only a month after his father, Charles F. Peirce, died. This seems to bring us back to the first tragedy in this story of namesakes, when Charles F. Leonard died in 1815, only a few years after his father's death.

*Mr. Decas, Attorney-at-law and Town Counsel for the town of Middleboro, has done and is doing extensive research on the Peirce family. Mr. Decas purchased the Peter H. Peirce homestead on North Main Street, Middleboro, and is restoring it as nearly as possible to its original architecture, both the interior and exterior.*

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## A FAMOUS WALK OF THE OLDEN TIME

The walk of Mercy Thomson (afterward the wife of Nehemiah Bennett, of the old Bennett house, for many years one of the town's most efficient public officers,) with her two companions, to Plymouth, over the great snows, in the winter of 1717 is one of the most famous on record. She was then eighteen years of age. Of the name of her companions there is left no record. This we regret, as they deserve to be remembered for an act of such wonderful endurance and intrepidity. They started early one Sunday morning. The snow was six feet deep. The walk had to be accomplished on snowshoes, which are of themselves heavy, especially if the snow lies light on the surface, and sifts through to the top of the shoes. The shoe is confined to the front of the foot, leaving the heel of the shoe to drag upon the ground. Hence, all the weight falls on the front tendons of the foot. This often produces excruciating pain, especially during the first days of travel. The Canadian *voyageurs* of the North West often spoke of this, and of the sufferings they endured the early part of their journey over the great plains between Hudson's Bay and Lake Superior. They thought they had performed a good day's journey if they could travel thirty miles, with a pack of furs on their backs. Those three girls walked *twenty-six miles* — thirteen miles to Plymouth and the same distance back. We do not know that they stopped anywhere on the road. Probably not, as the days were short — in the middle of winter — and they must make the best of their journey home before nightfall. Therefore they had to move along at a comparatively rapid rate over the deep snows, past the houses half-buried in the deep drifts, over the smaller trees of the forest entirely covered from view, while all around them stretched out one desert waste of snow. Truly it was a long and wonderful journey for three young girls to make, and deserves to be recorded among the many heroic deeds of the old pioneers of the ancient town of Middleboro .

What was the motive of these three Middleboro girls of the olden time for making such a journey, in the winter of 1717? Tradition says they were prompted to do it from a desire to hear an eminent divine, who had lately arrived at Plymouth, preach. They certainly deserved a good sermon, as a reward for so much energy and self-denial. We fear that few of our own day would go so far and suffer so much to hear the most "eminent divine" that ever spoke from a pulpit in all the United States of America.

## PEREGRINE WHITE'S VISIT TO THE OLD HOUSE

"Peregrine White," said Mrs. Mercy Bennett, "once made a visit, and sat within the walls of the old house." He must have been quite advanced in years at that time, as he was the first white child born within the limits of New England. Says the historian of the day, "In May, 1621, the first marriage in New England was celebrated. Edward Winslow espoused the widow of William White, and the mother of Peregrine White, whose infant lullaby was the *first ever sung by Saxon voice* in New England. He was born in November, 1620, one year before. The marriage was celebrated in the Pilgrim's church in Plymouth. Indeed that famous old building partook more of the character of a fortress than a church. Hear what the traveler, Isaac DeRasieres, says of it, who visited Plymouth a few years later: "Upon the hill they have a square building with a flat roof made of thick-sawn planks stayed with oak beams. On the top are ranged six cannons, which shoot iron balls of four or five pounds, and command the surrounding country. The lower part they use for a church, where preaching is had on Sundays and the usual holidays. The settlers assemble by beat of drums, each with his musket or firelock in front of the captain's door. They have their cloaks on, and place themselves in order, three abreast and are led by a sergeant without beat of drum. Behind comes the governor in a long robe. Beside him on the right hand walks the preacher, and on the left hand the captain with his side arms and cloak on, and with a small cane in his hand. Behind them came the women and children. So they march in good order, and on reaching the church each one sets his arms down near him and within easy grasp."

It was here and with such surroundings that the first marriage in New England was celebrated — liable to be interrupted at any moment by the savage yell and warwhoop, the roar of cannon, and the crash of resounding arms.

Think of it, ye who dwell in comfort in quiet homes, hearing the music of marriage bells so joyfully, and where happy hearts beat so lovingly, with no fear of evil, — think of it, and drop a tear to the memory of those who, through so much suffering, bought for you the heritage of peace!

## A TERRIBLE ENCOUNTER

Peregrine White was well acquainted with Miles Standish, and could relate many interesting anecdotes of that daring and reckless adventurer. He could tell the story of his fight with Pecksuot in a way that would make all hearts thrill and all ears tingle to hear. The following is a description of the fight as it is recorded by the historian of the times. Pecksuot was an Indian of immense muscular size and strength. Standish was a small man. Pecksuot often taunted him with his inferior size, stretching forth his great muscular arm and waving it with knife in hand, "This has drank the blood of many valiant chiefs, and it will drink the blood of many more" — casting a meaning look at Standish. Standish quietly pocketed these insults and awaited his chance. It soon came. Pecksuot and two other chiefs of a conspiracy against the English were finally all entrapped in one cabin. Standish with three companions and Hobomok were also present. The door was secured and a terrible death-grapple ensued. There were no shrieks, no cries, no warwhoops. Nothing was heard save the fierce panting of the combatants and the dull thuds of the blows given and returned. Hobomok stood quietly by and meddled not. Standish, closing with Pecksuot, snatched from the braggadocio's neck his vaunted knife and plunged it into his foeman's heart. One blow did not kill him; frenzied and

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glaring, he leaped on Standish and tugged wildly at his throat. The struggle was brief but awful; and Standish called his whole skill into requisition to complete his victory. At length the death blow was dealt, and Pecksuot lay bleeding and dying on the ground. The two other chiefs also met the same fate from the companions of Standish.

This was considered the capital exploit of Miles Standish. It struck terror to the hearts of his enemies. The Indians who were engaged in the conspiracy sued for peace, and all was quiet about Middleboro for fifty years.

### A LONG AND EVENTFUL LIFE

Mrs. Mercy Bennett, the wife of Nehemiah Bennett, lived a long and useful life. She was born in 1699 and died in 1799, aged 99 years, 10 months, 11 days. She could go far back in memory to the days of the first settlers in Middleboro, when the inhabitants dwelt in log cabins remote from each other, and the woodsman's axe was heard ringing through the dense forest from morning to night, changing the desert to a garden, and the wilderness to a fruitful field. She had witnessed the principal events of the last century so often spoken of by the old inhabitants; the great earthquake of 1756, the dark days of 1780, and suffered and wept with those who had seen their sons and husbands and brothers lying dead on the bloody fields of the Revolution. She had reached the meridian of life when Washington was born, and died the same year with the Father of his Country. She had heard Whitefield preach in 1746, and was among the crowd that filled the aisles of the old Meeting House, when the great preacher, from the tall pulpit under the "sounding board", thrilled the hearts of the rural population of that day with his matchless eloquence. She had conversed with John Alden, the grandson of the Pilgrim, who died in Middleboro aged one hundred and two years. She had no doubt heard him relate the story of "Miles Standish's Courtship", and the journey of his grandsire through the woods of Plymouth to the home of Priscilla Mullens, bearing a message of love to her from the stalwart Captain asking her to become his wife; and her arch reply to the handsome young blushing Puritan: *"Why don't you speak for yourself, John?"*

### LUKE SHORT

Mrs. Mercy Bennett had seen and conversed with Luke Short who died in Middlbeoro in 1746, having reached the remarkable age of *one hundred and sixteen years.* The old people used to repeat an epigram composed by one of the ancient Middleboro rhymesters on Luke Short. The lines are these:

"His name was *Short,* his life was *long;*
 Well born on English ground,
Though very *small,* among us all,
 No *greater* man was found."

He was born in Dartmouth, England, ten years after the landing of the Pilgrims. He came to America when he was sixteen years old, first settled in Marblehead, and afterwards removed to Middleboro. He had lived to see *eight* kings sit on the throne of England.

Charles, the Second, of whom our ancestors, when they were children, used to drawl out these lines in the old "New England Primer":

"The Royal Oak it was the Tree
That saved his Royal Majestie."

After hiding in the "Royal Oak," for a time to escape his enemies he fled to France. He was afterwards recalled to the English throne, which he never honored. It was this king on whom the witty Earl of Rochester wrote the imaginary caustic epitaph,

"Here lies our sovereign Lord, the King,
 Whose word no man relied on;
He never said a foolish thing,
 And never did a wise one."
James, the Second, the hater of Protestants,
William and Mary, who reigned conjointly,
Anne, the last of the Stuart monarchs,
 Under whom Newton and Pope and Addison lived.
George, the First, of the house of Hanover,
George, the Second, great uncle of Queen Victoria.

Luke Short used to say, "I have seen Oliver Cromwell, on horseback riding through the streets of London. He was a rough, burly soldier-like looking man, and a great fighter. I was nearby, and saw the blood spurt on the clothes of the executioner when he cut off the head of Charles, the First, of England." These were the days in which the king-hating Roundheads ruled, so called because they cut their hair round, like a skullcap; while the king-loving Cavaliers, their enemies, wore theirs in a long cue dangling behind.

### REMARKABLE INCIDENT

There is an incident of remarkable spiritual significance recorded in the life of Luke Short. He was sitting on his farm one day when he was a hundred years old; and a scene, witnessed *ninety* years before, was presented before his mind, as if written there in daguerrotype. He was in St. Paul's Church, London. John Flabel, the great London preacher of that day, was in the pulpit. He preached with great power. At the close of his sermon instead of blessing the congregation, he rose and said, "How can I bless whom the Lord hath not blessed," or words to that effect. He paused, and all was silence. A great solemnity fell on all the waiting congregation. No one moved; no one spoke. An English Baronet who was present under its mighty influence swooned and fell helpless to the floor. Invisible spirits, a numerous host, seemed to be hovering over the hushed congregation — spirits from the unseen spheres above — and every heart lay naked and open to their view as if in the immediate presence of the Infinite.

The whole scene came like a flash of lightning before the mind of Luke Short. The past stood all unveiled before him. It had been written by angel hands in the innermost chambers of his soul. It could never be effaced. It turned the whole current of his life. From that hour he became a changed man. He soon after joined the church of devout and sincere worshippers who assembled weekly within the walls of the old Meeting House on the Green, and walked with them in love and amity to the end of his one hundred and sixteen years.

Thus, after the longest life, and after all our devious wanderings through the shadowy valley of Time,

"Still shall the soul around it call
The things we deemed forgotten here;
And *written on the eternal wall,*
The Past shall reappear."

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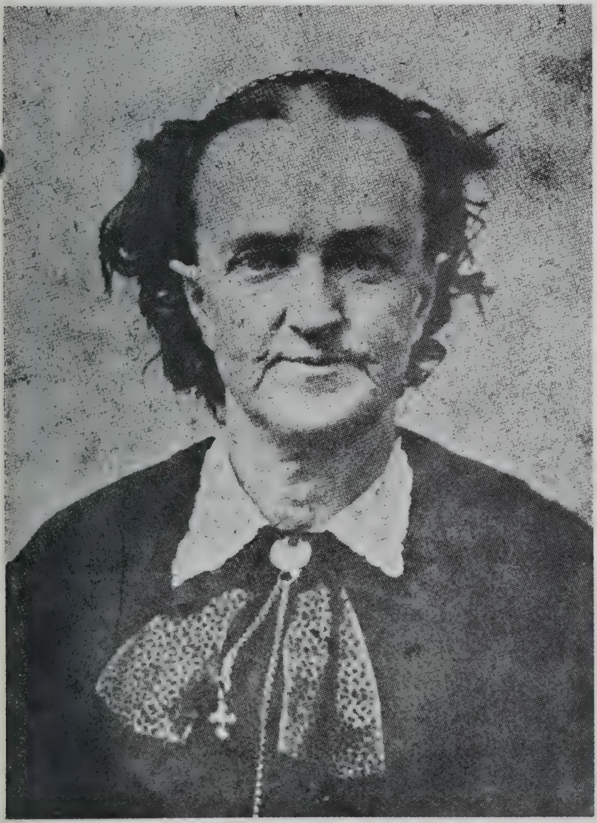
## THE CROSSMAN FAMILY OF MIDDLEBORO

In the early 1900's, the Crossman family consisted of Cordelia Chapin Crossman, Clarissa and Hannah and a brother Alpha. They occupied a farm located just south of the present overhead bridge on South Main Street and, going from town, on a hill to the left of the road.

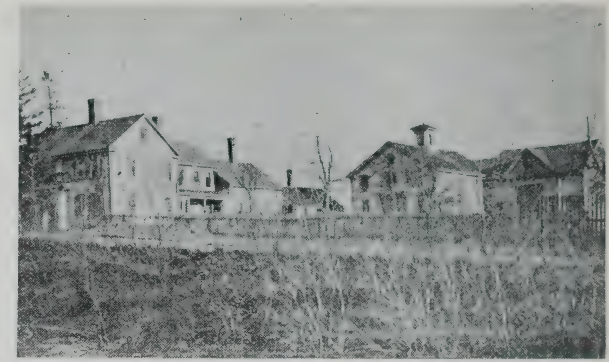
Cordelia and her two sisters for a time conducted a boarding school. Afterward Cordelia became a doctor especially interested in treating cancer cases. She invented a plaster used extensively in the treatment of the disease, but no doctor was allowed to use it if a surgeon's knife had been used in the treatment. Alpha, the brother, worked the farm. He was the last surviving member of the family and was ninety-one years old when he died.

The farm buildings later burned. The family also owned property on School Street and it was their name given to Crossman Avenue.

All four members were known to be peculiar and could be classed as "characters."



**DR. CORDELIA CHAPIN CROSSMAN**



**THE CROSSMAN FARM**
**South Main Street, south of the overhead bridge**

## FAIRVIEW DRIVING PARK

### Fall Brook 1890-1909

Fairview Driving Park was originally the Fall Brook Track, located in the southern part of town known as Fall Brook. Racing was begun at the track in the late 1800's and reached the height of popularity in 1894. Attractions included trotting and bicycle races. On July 30, 1900, an exciting bicycle race was held in which James Sparrow and William Simonds contested against Benjamin Chapman and William Horn. In the trotting class horses were driven by William Egger, Thomas Sisson, Richard Macomber, Mozark Smith, George S. Clark, Dr. Fred L. Rounds and E. H. Marks.

Mr. Marks was responsible for the downfall of the track. As manager, he collected entrance fees and gate money, and with money from other sources, the sum reached more than $400. After the races, winners were looking for their money, but Mr. Marks had disappeared. The winners moved in a body to the Nemasket House where Mr. Marks had been staying, but a stable boy said he had seen him heading for a trolley car, and that was the last seen of Mr. Marks.

In 1901, George S. Clark bought the track at auction for $950. In 1905, acting for the trustees, Amos E. Eaton sold the property for $1,000 to Cromwell Washburn of South Wareham who erected a new grandstand. In 1906, the track was purchased by E. P. Boynton, who also purchased the beautiful home of Abishai Miller that stood nearby. It was Mr. Boynton who changed the name of the track to Fairview Driving Park. However, by 1908, the track was in financial trouble and the next year the property was converted into houselots.

# TWIGS & BRANCHES
# of
# Olde Middleborough
# in
# Plymouth County
# Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

One of the interesting phases of history is what happened in our section of Massachusetts shortly after the end of the Revolutionary War. At that time the province of Maine was actually a part of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and remained so until the 15th of March in the year 1820.

Not everyone supported the colonists' desire to be independent and not under the jurisdiction of England. There were others who quietly and without fanfare supported the Crown and were spoken of as Loyalists. As might be expected the Loyalists were not popular in communities where the desire to become an independent country was prevalent.

Many of the early settlers of Maine were Massachusetts residents who fled to Maine and/or to Canada rather than change their allegiance or have their homes confiscated.

When the Revolutionary War ended the Commonwealth of Massachusetts did not have much reserve capital and many of the soldiers were paid in land instead of cash. Paying in acreage instead of coins meant that Massachusetts could enlarge existing settlements or establish new towns in the northern part of the commonwealth in the section which later entered the union as the tenth state and was called Maine.

This is why we find duplication of town names, some of which acquired a prefix of the word New . . . as New Sharon, New Vineyard. The region was known as the Sandy River Valley. Like many other communities, Middleborough did its bit to populate the area. A great many of the families were from the Islands, namely, Chilmark, Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard, Edgartown and other towns.

Abel Hatch was born in Sandwich, Massachusetts, married and had six children born there. The third child was a daughter, Releaf, born in Sandwich on 12 August in 1783. She married 21 August 1806 Apollos Pratt son of Paul and Jael (Bennett) Pratt of New Vineyard, Maine. Apollus was born in Middleborough 9 July 1781. On the 3d of June 1767 in Middleborough, Massachusetts Paul and Jael (Bennett) Pratt had a son, their second child, named Eleazer. The Paul Pratt family were early settlers at New Vineyard, Maine. Eleazer Pratt married twice, first to Aurelia Winslow by whom he had two children and secondly to Rhoda Luce by whom he had eight children.

No community is sufficient unto itself insofar as the populace is concerned. Some families are not in the least migratory but are born, married and die and are buried all within the boundaries of one town. Other families move about constantly and a family of six or seven children are often born in that many different communities.

Middleborough has always had close ties with its neighbor communities of Bridgewater and Taunton. Records from one town will often supplement the records of the other town when doing research on a family lineage. There can be a lot of confusion and incorrect information if anything is left to guesswork. The Pratt and Leonard families are typical of the problems of identification. There are two distinct Leonard families but they didn't always stay put and when we find a Leonard in Middleborough it is like tossing a coin . . . heads it's the Bridgewater family . . . tails the early ancestry is the Taunton line. Pratts are even more confusing since there are several Pratt families . . . not just two . . . and the several different families intermarried.

An interesting point of this wanderlust of our ancestors is that so many of the families settled first in Massachusetts and a few generations later went to Maine, then after a generation or two . . . perhaps three or more . . . returned to Massachusetts.

Another indication that our early ancestors liked to travel is that so many of them served in the Revolutionary War, applied for and received pensions . . . yet as the recipient of the pension they were located in another state. It does add to the confusion, though, if you are seeking a 'very lost' great-great-great grandfather.

Much of this travelling about occurred prior to 1800. They were stalwart people to walk the hundreds of miles they did . . . later came the teams and the horses, but it was a long time before the railroad and the steamboat.

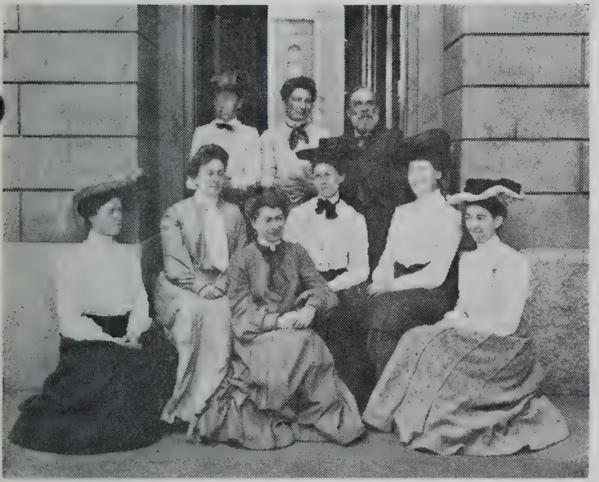
Vermont was also a popular state with the Middleborough people and there are several Vermont towns such as Woodstock and Pomfret where the tie to the family tree can be made.

A church record of admissions and dismissals also tells the family history as well as the history of the church and indirectly of the town. In the catalogue of the First Church of Middleborough we find mention of some nine (9) neighboring towns. There are many interesting entries such as the dismissal of Mrs. John (Mary) Haskell, Jr. on an uncertain date in 1727 to a church in Killingly, Connecticut. In 1734 John Drew was dismissed to the church at Halifax.

All of this coming and going of people is what makes up the history of a town as well as tells the ancestral story of the people. The fact that the first census was taken in 1790 in the other New England states is a problem with research in Vermont inasmuch as the census for Vermont was taken in 1791. Consequently families moving into Vermont from another state frequently appear in two censuses. Just another of the many pitfalls when doing research. Middleborough may also appear in the records as Middleberry. Research demands patience and slow, careful checking . . . it is not a speed race if you seek to establish an accurate historical account of a town and its people.

## IN MEMORIAM

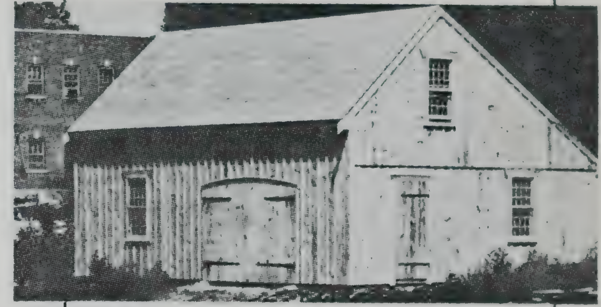
The Middleborough Historical Association lost a loyal member and ardent worker by the death of Mrs. A. Kingman Pratt, known to her friends as "Chubby." Her special interest was the Middleborough Historical Museum and she gave generously of her time as hostess and in working on projects to support and further the interests of the Museum. She was a member of the Museum Committee. Her aid and never failing fund of ideas for the benefit of the Museum will be greatly missed. In lieu of flowers, the family requested that contributions in Mrs. Pratt's memory be made to the Middleborough Historical Museum.



## STAFF, MIDDLEBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY
### Taken at opening of new library building, 1904

Front row. l to r, Myra Leonard (Mrs. William T. Tillson); Marion Tillson (Mrs. Alton G. Pratt); Edith Cobb of New Bedford. Middle row, Alice Alden, Mary Eddy, Mrs. Adelaide K. Thatcher. Back row, Florence A. Robinson, Mary Farr of Philadelphia, cataloger; Joseph E. Beals, trustee.

## Museum blacksmith shop built



**ADDITION** to the buildings on Jackson street housing historical artifacts and memorabilia is the blacksmith shop recently completed by Paul Malcolm. Forge and other equipment will be displayed in this building. (Gazette Photo by Clint Clark)

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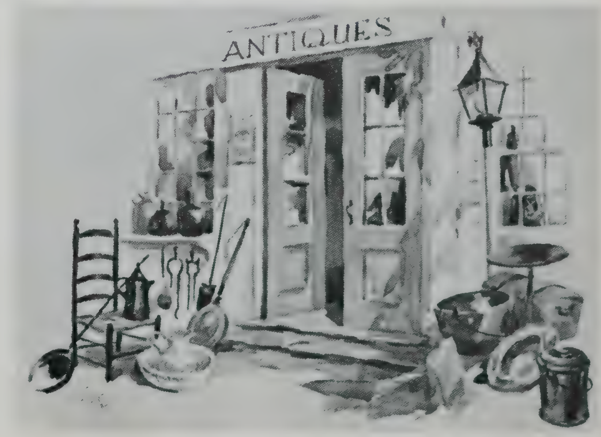


## TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENT

## SIXTEEN SHILLING PURCHASE

The Lot on assaqamset neck in the Right of William Pentus was laid out for 22 acres and lyeth Towards the Southerly End of Sd neck. The Two Lots is the third alotment in the Sixteen Shilling purchase in the Right of William Pontus Are in Number the 58th lot containing about 30 acres and a half which 58th lot lyeth to the westward of the pond Called the Long Pond about midway between sd Pond and the cedar swamp.

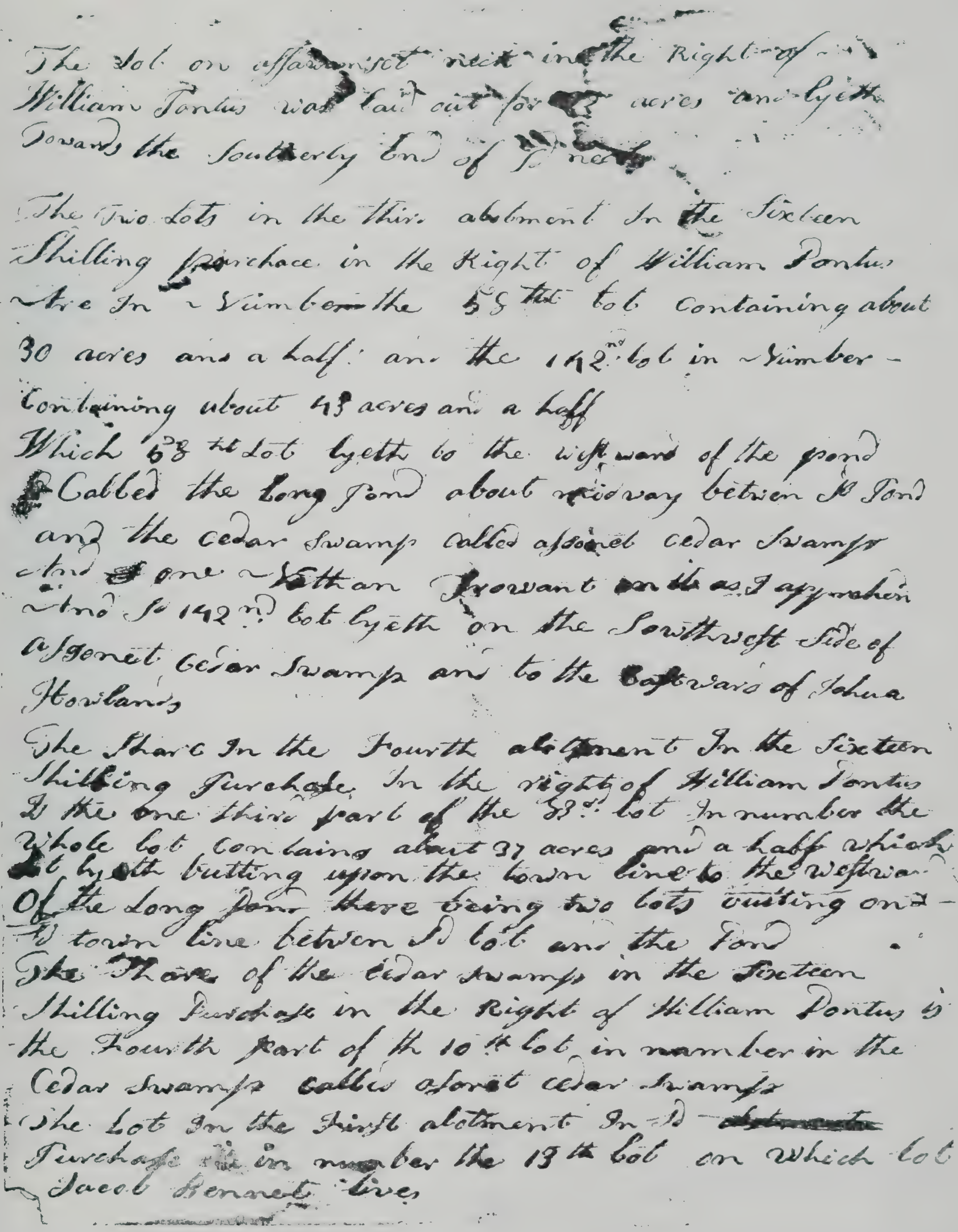
And one Nathan Trowant on it as I apprehend And sd 142d lot lyeth on the Southwest side of assonet cedar swamp. and to the eastward of Joshua Howlands The Share is the Fourth alotment in the Sixteen Shilling Purchase in the right of William Pontus is the one third part of the 83rd lot in number the whole lot contains about 37 acres and a half which lot lyeth butting upon the town line to the westward of the Long Pond there being two lots butting on Sd town line beween sd lot and the Pond. The share of the cedar swamp in the Sixteen Shilling Purchase in the Right of William Pontus is the Fourth part of the 10th lot in number is the Cedar Swamp called assonet cedar swamp.

The lot is the First alotment in sd purchase is in number the 13th lot on which lot Jacob Bennet lives and the lot in the Second alotment in sd Purchase is in number the 14th lot on which Daniel Caswell dwells.

On May 14, 1675 land was bought for thirty-three pounds by Constant Southworth and John Tomson of Watispaquin (Tispequin) Sr., and William Tispaquin Indian sachems now dwelling within the township of Middleborough three tracts of land called the 'Sixteen Shilling Purchase.' This was by far the largest purchase embracing what is now Lakeville. From Weston's History of the Town of Middleboro.

The proprietors of the Sixteen Shilling Purchase were numerous, eigthy-two in all, among them some well known names: John Howland, John Winslow, Peregrine White, John Alden, Frances Billington, Samuel Fuller, Zachariah Eddy, John Eddy, Isaac Howland, and George Danson.

The Middleborough Historical Association is indebted to Mrs. Robert J. Cartwright of the Sharon (Mass.) Historical Commission and Sharon Historical District Commission for her efforts in transferring the document from the Sharon archives to the Middleborough Historical Museum.



The Lot on assawamsett neck in the Right of
William Pontus was laid out for [illegible] acres and lyeth
Towards the Southerly End of ye neck

The Two Lots in the third allotment In the Sixteen
Shilling purchace in the Right of William Pontus
Are In Number the 58th lot containing about
30 acres and a half: and the 142nd lot in Number
Containing about 43 acres and a half
Which 58th Lot lyeth to the westward of the pond
Called the Long pond about midway betwen sd Pond
and the cedar swamp called assonet cedar swamp
And one Nathan Howard on the as I apprehend
And sd 142nd lot lyeth on the Southwest side of
assonet cedar swamp and to the Eastward of Joshua
Howlands

The Share In the Fourth allotment In the Sixteen
Shilling Purchase In the right of William Pontus
Is the one third part of the 33rd lot In number the
whole lot contains about 37 acres and a half which
lot lyeth butting upon the town line to the westward
Of the Long pond there being two lots butting on ye
sd town line betwen sd lot and the Pond
The Share of the cedar swamp in the Sixteen
Shilling Purchase in the Right of William Pontus is
the Fourth part of the 10th lot in number in the
Cedar swamp called assonet cedar swamp
The Lot In the First allotment In sd ~~allotment~~
Purchase is in number the 13th lot on which lot
Jacob Bennet lives

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT
SIXTEEN SHILLING PURCHASE
1675

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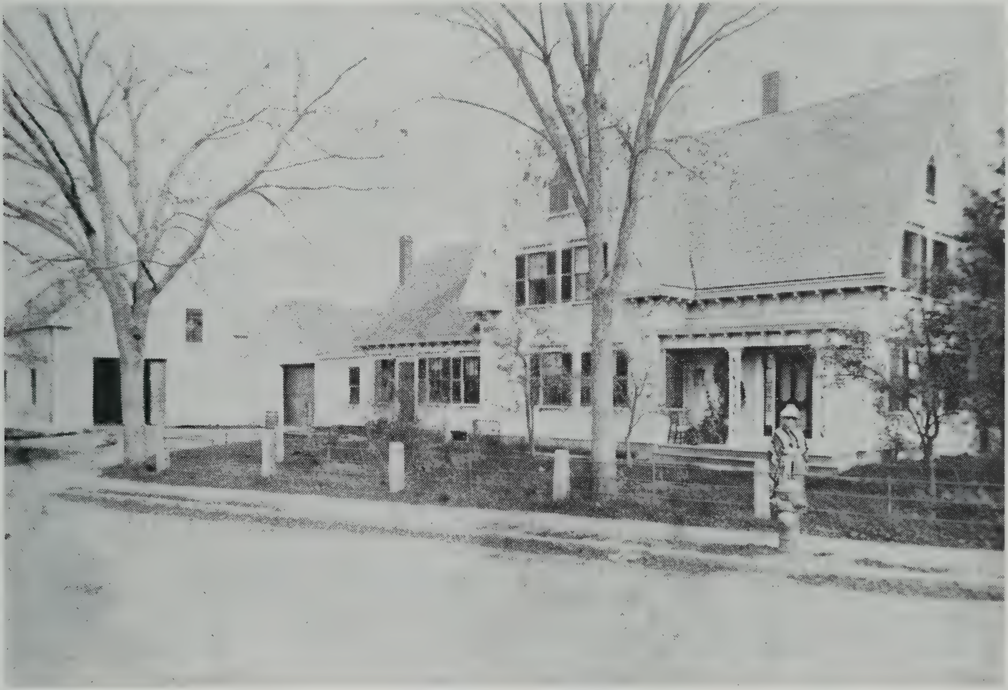

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## THE WASHBURN-BASSETT HOUSE

by Miriam A. Bassett

There are people in Middleboro who remember with nostalgia the old houses that have now disappeared from the scene.

The white gable-roofed Victorian house shown on the cover of this issue stood on the corner of Center and Oak Streets and was a landmark for over a hundred years. It was surrounded by an iron fence with stone posts and iron gates. A carriage house and a barn was joined to it, and in back of the barn was a garden, an orchard and a lane that led to Pearl Street.

Two brothers, William and Peter Washburn had it built in 1861. William Washburn and his wife, Harriet, lived there for about ten years. Peter Washburn bought out his brother in 1874 and lived there with his wife, Mary (Parker) Washburn and their family: Charles Parker, Mary Lizzie and Ella Maria. During those years the house was known as the Peter Washburn home.

Peter Washburn was for many years in partnership with E. O. Parker, his father-in-law, in the coal, lumber and grain business. Just before his death in 1900, his son Charles Parker Washburn sold out his grain elevator in Fitchburg, came to Middleboro, bought E. O. Parker's interest and became the owner of C. P. Washburn grain business. He immediately made vast improvements by constructing new buildings and a grain elevator. By 1918 C. P. Washburn Company was well known in this area. In the ensuing years, the grandsons and great grandsons have made many additions to the business, selling building materials, masonry supplies, hardware, besides the original commodity, grain and feed.

In 1900, the house was inherited by Mary Washburn Bassett, and was henceforth known as the Bassett house. Mr. and Mrs. William Bassett lived there with their three daughters, Inez (Mrs. Barney Alder); Miriam A., and Helen (Mrs. Gardner Tibbetts). They spent many happy years growing up in their birthplace, their grandfather's old home.

In later years there were changes, such as replacing the iron fence with a hedge, and evergreen trees on the front and side of the house. In 1945 the property was owned by Miss Miriam A. Bassett who lived there for ten more years, at which time she sold to the Sacred Heart Church, which made the house into two apartments. In 1963 the house was so badly damaged by fire that another old house in Middleboro was torn down. Now on that corner stands an imposing brick building, The Sacred Heart School.

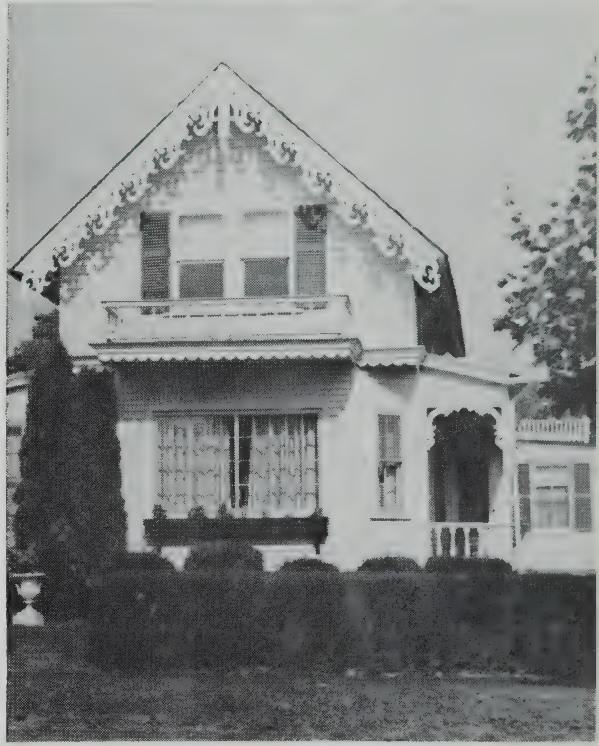
In front of the school stands a large tulip tree that was planted by Mrs. Peter Washburn a hundred years ago. It still stands straight and tall, giving out beautiful blossoms in the spring. Although storms and hurricanes have taken some of the branches, it stands like a sentinel, a reminder of the old Victorian days.

## A GINGERBREAD HOUSE

### 26 Rock Street

### Middleboro

The present home of Miss Miriam A. Bassett
and Mrs. Inez (Bassett) Alder



Photograph by Clint Clark

## A. GINGERBREAD HOUSE

by Miriam A. Bassett

In this interesting example of a gingerbread house my sister Inez and I now live at 26 Rock Street in Middleboro. This house has such a similarity to the famous gingerbread houses on that part of Martha's Vineyard called "Cottage City," that it has been suggested the house may have been moved up from the island, but there are no records to substantiate this fact.

When I was a small girl my father was taking my sister Helen and me to the circus. The circus field was at the end of Rock Street, and as we walked along my attention was drawn to a very ornate and attractive house across the street. I was so fascinated that I lingered and fell far behind my father and sister. My father called to me to hurry or we would miss seeing the animals.

"What are you looking at?" he asked.

I replied I was looking at the pretty house across the street. "It is trimmed with lace," I said. (Little did I think I would one day be living in it.)

"That isn't lace," my father replied. "It is gingerbread."

"It doesn't look like gingerbread," I answered.

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XVII 1976 Number 2
Mertie E. Romaine .................... Editor

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The early town directories did not list the streets of the town with the names of residents as they do today; persons names were listed alphabetically. Knowing that a Mr. Sisson was an early owner of the house, we found in one of the earliest directories, 1879, that George F. Sisson and his wife Clarinda resided at 26 Rock Street. They lived there for many years. After Mr. Sisson's death, Mrs. Sisson continued to reside there until her death in 1919. Neighbors still speak of the abundance of plants and flowers that filled the windows and window boxes during the time of the Sisson's occupancy.

In the same year, 1919, Mr. Abraham G. Newkirk became the owner and he and his family lived there until 1948, when the house became the property of Mr. and Mrs. Constantine Norvish. It was from the Norvishes that I purchased the house in 1966.

My sister Inez and I often think of the past history of this house and wish we knew more about it. Of one thing we are certain: it is a delightful experience to live in a gingerbread house.

◆

## RAILWAY EXPRESS IN MIDDLEBORO

By Lyman Butler

With the recent closing by bankruptcy of the Railway Express Agency ends an era of transportation of fast express which had been in operation for a total of 136 years, a direct descendant of the historic Pony Express and American Express. At the end it was known as R.E.A. "Railway Express Agency." This service was a very important part of this town's shipping and receiving of goods. At this time after some research I thought it might be appropriate to give a brief history of this Agency in town.

The first rail line in town was the Fall River branch, called Middleboro Railway Co. which started in 1845. Later the same year it joined with the Randolph, Bridgewater Line and went under the name United Corporation. In 1846 the Cape Cod branch was incorporated and in 1847 the first train was run to Sandwich. In 1848 the Middleboro and Taunton Railroad was chartered and in 1872 all roads were consolidated under the name Old Colony Railroad Co. In 1892 the Plymouth and Middleboro Railroad was completed and leased to the Old Colony. In 1893 this and all other divisions were absorbed by the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad and were known as such until a few years ago the Penn Central took over the whole system and at this writing is in a state of bankruptcy itself. R.E.A. right to the end was the largest surface transportation network in the world with 232 terminals and served all fifty states and Canada and employed at peak 150,000 people. Nearly all towns had at least one express office.

At the start the express was known as New York and Boston Despatch Express Co. serving cities and towns of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad and later the Old Colony division. There were five different locations of the Agency in town, the earliest two being down town. The first was in the rear of the Nemasket House with the entrance from Center Street where the entrance to the parking lot is now, btween Craig's Drug and Sears, Roebuck. In the 1884 directory George W. Lovell was listed as the Agent and Henry H. Shaw and Albert Clark messengers or drivers of the horse drawn express wagons of the day. Horses were kept in a building at the rear of the old Y.M.C.A. building. The next Office was in the Jones Block on North Main Street with Nate Moore, Agent. Some of the other drivers were Walter Bump, Bert Bosworth and Edwin Shaw. While in this building Horace Swift later took over as Office Agent. At this time the horses were kept at Warren Peasely Stable on Rock Street at about the location of the old Dr. Elliot house. As business increased the Office was moved to Everett Square in the building next to the blacksmith shop at Depot Grove.

The New York and Boston Despatch Co. was now taken over by American Railway Express keeping the same personnel with some extra drivers being added one of which was Harold Swift, son of the Agent. The horses were kept at Tom Sisson's Stable, later run by Andrew Sisson. Other employees were Oscar Anderson, Charles White, Frank Minot and Jim Kelly. Business was good and when a room became available at the North end of the Depot the Agency was transferred there with Mr. Swift still Agent. Jack Leary and Winthrop (Moe) Briggs went on as drivers.

With the coming of motor cars the horse drawn wagons were replaced with trucks. Drivers were some of the wagon drivers with William Kenneston and Fred Eldridge added. The latest location of the Office was in a small building near the water tank south of the Depot. After Mr. Swift gave up, the Agency was taken over by Fred Eldridge. As the express packages, mail and baggage were in the same car sometimes it was a hectic few minutes as each agent took care of his own and the train could not be held up as a schedule had to be kept.

With the coming of fast truck express service the railroad express was hard hit and with the passenger service stopped here the express cars were also stopped, but now the Railway Express Agency took over the operation under the name R.E.A., with a single truck driven by Fred Eldridge, delivering from the nearest location serviced by the Agency. At the end the truck was working out of Providence. United Parcel Service (U.P.S.) fast truck express lines and Parcel Post are the survivors of a business which was so vital to the needs of the town when its factories and mills were in operation. Though G. E. Keith shipped some shoes by freight car lots, many orders were carted to the express agency by Arnold Foye with his horse and wagon for many years. Leonard Shaw and Dean did most of their business by express with Dalton Penniman shipper and receiver. Leonard and Barrows, Star or Nemasket Mills, Colonial Brass Co. and Keith and Pratt Shoe Co., were the biggest users of the express company, as well as many merchants and householders who wanted quick delivery service. With the passing of the Railway Express Agency which started out with express service as the New York and Boston Railway Despatch Co. a once thriving business went the way of so many others in the name of progress.

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

of

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in

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by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

King Philip's war was of relatively short duration lasting only about a year and a half . . . 1675-1676. Plymouth was still the major settlement. The territory included in present day Middleborough was for many years the home territory of the Indians. There were some fifteen to twenty thousand Indians and the greatest concentration of them was in the area which first became known as Middleberry and later called Middleborough.

The first fifteen years after the earliest white settlers arrived the present Middleborough territory was considered a part of Plymouth but with the incorporation in 1669, the settlers were called of "Middleberry" . . . for the most part the settlers were the sons and grandsons of the small group of Pilgrims who arrived in 1620.

Many of the settlers were inter-related and within a three or four-generation span an early settler in Middleborough would be able to claim ancestry to two or more of the Pilgrims who first arrived at Plymouth.

The earliest town records of Middleborough were burned . . . destroyed during the Indian war. Lists of settlers at Middleborough have been compiled from various sources and there are slight variations in each List. Since Middleborough was considered at this early period as a part of Plymouth, there are many entries in the early Plymouth records which actually refer to Middleborough residents.

It is interesting to read these early records and see how many of the early surnames still appear in the Middleborough records today . . . such as the voting list, the tax list and even the telephone book.

Such names as Barrows, Bump, Clark, Cobb, Dawson, Dunham, Eaton as well as Fuller, Haskell, Hopkins, Howland, Miller, Morton, Nelson, Pratt, Shaw, Thomson, Tinkham, Thomas, Vaughn, Walker, Wright and Wood.

Bridgewater and Plymouth, Taunton, Halifax and Middleboro as well as other nearby areas are all contributing to the melting pot of residents and these many, many families are sometimes closely related, others are remotely related and still othrs are 'first generation' residents of Middleborough.

The Revolutionary War served to bring some families closer together but other families were torn apart through the divergent opinions as to whether or not to stay loyal to England or to fight for independence.

Middleborough had its share of Loyalists . . . those who favored the Crown. Perhaps the most noted was the Oliver family. Those of us who love the old houses, places and events which form our heritage regret that Peter Oliver remained loyal to the Crown. The Patriots . . . as those favoring the separation of the colonies from England were known . . . confiscated and frequently burned, the property of all known Loyalists . . . and the Oliver property was no exception. We are grateful for what has been preserved and restored as the mill at Oliver Mill Park.

As the town of Middleborough grew the family names introduced into the town records expanded and on the eve of the Revolutionary War there were many new surnames and Middleborough's ties to Plymouth were no longer the only bonds of relationship. By this time the Massachusetts Bay Colony had made its contribution to the growth of the Plymouth area as well as to the town of Middleborough specifically. Another factor in the growth and expansion of Middleborough from its status as a settlement of many early Pilgrim families was the introduction into the area of other religious sects such as the Baptist faith. The earliest religion was that of the Pilgrims or what is today the Congregational faith. With the mergers of various faiths over the years the tenets of the initial Congregational Church have been altered, abbreviated or discarded so that the present-day Congregational-Christian churches are not truly representative of what the Pilgrims believed in and established as their Articles of Faith.

The Baptist Church in North Middleborough was the earliest Baptist Church in Middleborough and was started by the Rev. Isaac Backus about 1749. Rev. Backus was born in Connecticut, came to Middleborough and established the Congregational Church at Titicut Green in 1748. The New Lights movement caused dissension and the Rev. Backus and some persons agreeing with him in his religious beliefs left to form the Baptist Church. Then churches of other denominations were established. With the establishing of these various houses of worship encouragement was given to those of like persuasion to settle in the Middleborough area.

Many of these newer families who arrived in Middleborough after the Revolutionary War were completely new families. Middleborough also sent out into other areas families who . . . for one reason or another . . . sought to become residents in other areas. Vermont was such a state and long before this area reached statehood, families and groups of families took up residence in Vermont. So while the surnames might have died out in the Middleborough area, they have re-appeared as early settlers in another area. Many Little Compton, Rhode Island families can trace their ancestry to Middleborough and the Plymouth Colony.

Middleborough, like some other communities, has houses that have remained in the same family for several generations. Many times in our efforts to identify ownership we will find the relationship of the various families who have lived for years in the same house.

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Cranberries

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Middleborough Historical Museum
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Dear Friend:

The Middleborough Historical Association considers it a privilege to be a sponsor of a new book of historical and regional interest, CANNONBALLS AND CRANBERRIES, by Fredrika Alexander Burrows. This is a part of our observance of the Bicentennial year since the book is concerned with the early iron industry in this area which figured prominently in waging the War of the American Revolution.

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## Reviews ★ ★

In reading CANNON[illegible]LLS AND CRANBERRIES, I was pleasantly surprised to find such an interesting and well researched work with so many (to me) new facts. The book is well written and easy to read. Fascinating!

Raymond Rider, Past President, Wareham
Historical Society. Local historian
and researcher for Society.

★

The author has woven historical fact into an accurate and enjoyable reading experience.

Carolyn B. Owen (Mrs. Gordon M.)
Archivist, Old Colony Historical Society
Historical columnist, VIGNETTES, Taunton
Daily Gazette, Taunton, Massachusetts.

★

Interesting, excellent for reading and reference. Fills a long-felt need for a history of iron and cranberries. Informative, factual.

Mertie E. Romaine, retired Middleborough
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Author of History of Middleborough,
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★

*William S. Sullwold, Publishing, 18 Pearl St., Taunton, Massachusetts 02780*

## A SKETCH OF SOME CHARACTERS OF YEARS AGO

JAMES A. BURGESS

*There was never a better example of a Middleboro character than James A. Burgess himself. He was well known for his grumpiness, his cutting remarks and his "bon mots." The word "curmudgeon" aptly applied to Mr. Burgess. Children were terrified to meet him on the street. As one of the terrified neighborhood children whose legs Mr. Burgess threatened to cut off if we played hopscotch just one more time on his walk, I look back now and am convinced his bark was worse than his bite; I believe all the while there was a twinkle to his eye.*

These articles were published in the Middleboro Gazette, 1907, 1908, 1909. Ed.

When the whites occupied that reservation formerly possessed by the Indians the question of drinking water came up and the Indians told them that in the spring near the river on the side of the hill and from which Spring Street now takes its name, good drinking water could be found. And for generation after generation until quite recently has the sturdy yeomanry of Muttock sipped their nectar from that spring. On the left hand corner of Spring Street at the foot of the hill was the large charcoal shed which was said to hold 1,500 cords of wood made into charcoal.

Before we cross the river it would be well to speak of one of the noted characters that resided in Muttock nearly a half century ago. He was William Hickey, an Irishman, a man of good ability, a farmer, and the first man that ever told me so that I could understand it, how Ireland happened to lose her crown.

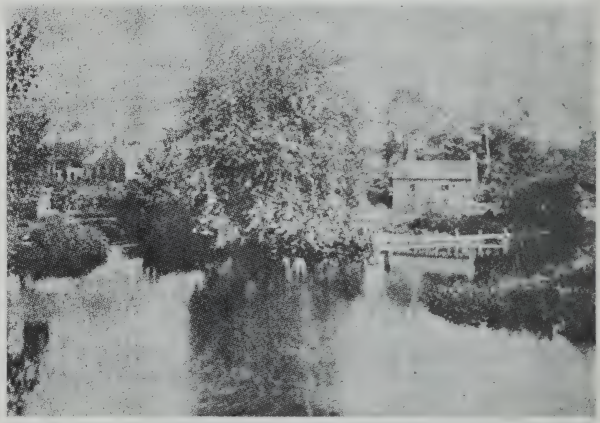
When the town was enrolled for a draft for the Civil War, an officer called on Mr. Hickey who was then of the age subject to draft and he told them there was himself and his wife. The officer did not want either of them. "You have a son," the officer said. Mr. Hickey replied, "You don't want him. He is near dead from consumption." When the officer was about to leave Mr. Hickey inquired if he had been to the graveyard.

Mr. Hickey lived in Earl Sproat's house. He came to Mr. Sproat's home and went into his sick room one day and bought of him a little wood and paid for it. Mr. Sproat said, "Hickey, you have lived in my home for a year and you have paid no house rent." Mr. Hickey replied, "Something to eat before house rent; something to wear before house rent; something to burn before house rent." Mr. Sproat's reply was, "Where are you going to burn it unless you have a house to live in?" "I had forgotten about that," said Mr. Hickey and paid his rent.

Now I guess we will cross the river. Up the lane by the herring weir is a two-tenement house which was the store owned and occupied by Judge Weston, and which stood near the street in front of Judge Weston's home. The Washburn store was at the time of Gen. Washburn's death thoroughly stocked with all kinds of goods and materials, but he left behind a son who lacked the business capacity of his sire and those goods even to the very best of English broadcloth were allowed to lay there and become moth eaten. When Philander Washburn died a son-in-law got possession of that store and crowds of people came to look at those old goods. I remember on one counter there were said to be 115 dozen of bone combs with backs six inches high. Such was a specimen of the stocking of the entire store. This old building has been made into a dwelling. Philander Washburn was a dignified man and a good temperance man, but he was not the man in business that his father was.

The first Irish family that came to Middleboro sought out Muttock. It was a family named Shay. The first German family was Henry Arnold's folks, who took down the old house in front of where Louis Ritter now lives and built a new one. The first "down east" family, as they were called, came to Muttock and their name was Butler. The first French Canadian was Ralph McSorley, and he took residence in Muttock, too. The first "blue nose" also headed for Muttock, but I cannot recall his name.

In front of my father's house in Muttock stood a large buttonwood tree that was about 32 feet in circumference. Now I have been asked to tell where Kitt's garden was. Kitt came from England and his wife was the mother of Mary Norcutt who was a servant of Judge Oliver. In the beginning we had but one bridge over the dam and that was in front of the mill. Later on a wooden bridge was built. On this side and between the two bridges this man had a garden which was named after him. It showed very plainly until the stone bridge was put up and then it disappeared.



### MUTTOCK DAM

A portion of the old mill dam at Muttock. On the right is shown the old community herring house where these fish were smoked and salted for distribution to the inhabitants of the town who were eligible for free fish at that time. It was carried on for this use for many years and was moved some years ago. At the left is seen the house of Earl Sproat. In later years James A. Burgess and family occupied it, and more recently before being torn down, was occupied by the Gabrey family.

Now one word about the herring. This was really the regular fishing place on the Nemasket river and I have seen of a Monday morning more than 40 teams at 4 o'clock waiting for their turn to get some herring. They each got 200. The herring were the source of a good many warm debates at town meeting. The town used to give every poor widow 200 herring. The question was asked by a new selectman what constituted a "poor widow." Before the moderator could make any reply, Sylvanus Hinckley came to his feet and said, "Mr. Moderator, any woman who has lost her husband is a poor widow, and there sir is your answer." In those days herring had the right of way and I have seen of a Monday morning 40,000 herring caught at Muttock dam before 12 o'clock. People ate them in those days and it was no disgrace. My father every year cured and dried about 30,000 herring for the people of the town. Six or seven thousand herring were taken in the old days to the poor house. That was the old poor farm but with our new one it would seem more appropriate to be in keeping with the building to have quail on toast.

We had a man who used to come to Muttock a good deal, and always to Washburn's store. He came one afternoon and as he lived two miles away he wanted to remain in the store all night. They decided not to let him. He went up to Gen Washburn's barn, crawled into the hay mow and went to sleep. Alanson Gammons came to feed the cattle and saw a pair of boots sticking out of the hay. He pulled on them and out of the hay came a man. The man came down to the store and asked the clerk, Harry Hubbard, to write out his night's lodging. While he was writing, Philander Washburn came out and gave the man a lecture about a man of his ability to use liquor in any form. Let's have the victim's poetry:

Tom is not dead, he lies in bed
He snores, but soundly he sleeps.
When one Tom more is in the store,
Who cannot laugh, but weeps.

The General's barn, I'd have you larn,
Is the ward-room of Rover.
Last night I lay among the hay
As snug as pig in clover.

It's been my fate to serve of late
False deities and Mammons;
But on this morn, although forlorn
I served Alanson Gammons.

He being stout soon helped me out
From my snug hay mow cupboard;
Success attend that worthy friend
Success to Harry Hubbard.

Success to Soule, he can control
A drunkard when he lies;
Success to Tom, O may I come
To be a man likewise.

Now I go home an honest Tom,
No more I mean to wander.
Nor in the hay again to lay
Supported by Philander.

The house now occupied by Henry Champion Jones, a teacher in the Latin school in Boston, was built by Judge Oliver for his son John. The father remained loyal to the kin in Revolutionary times while his son John espoused the cau of the colonists. John married a daughter of ex-governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts. There is probably no house in New England that has the historic connections of this house. Some of the leading men of New England stopped there. Through that farm ran the brook from which Oliver got his ore, and the old dam which he built that the ore might be dug may still be seen.

In that house LaFayette has lingered, and Ben Franklin has slept there. I think, if I am correct, Franklin was there for three days and a reception was tendered him at which distinguished men and women of the Old Colony and even Boston were present. I have been told that Rebecca and Joanna Scollay, from whom Scollay Square, Boston, takes its name, were frequent visitors, and were there for the Franklin reception. They came fully dressed with their heads powdered and their stays well laced and I have been told that they slept bolstered up in some high arm chairs all night so that they would not get their hair mussed. Gov. Hutchinson was a frequent visitor and Gov. Bowdoin was also to be seen there considerably during his term of office.

The property passed into the control of Judge Thomas Weston, descending from him to Earle Sproat, who married Judge Weston's daughter, Bethania, and moved there to live. He brought with him the property which he owned in the old Sproat Tavern at the Green. In the attic of that house I found the cot bed and the old hair covered trunk which Ebenezer Sproat, who was a lieutenant-coloned and an aide-de-camp on the staff of George Washington, brought with him from Valley Forge to Middleboro. In that trunk I found the original signatures of the men who formed the Cincinnatus Society, which is alive today, with the name of George Washington, who was its first president, at the top of the signatures on this old rice paper.

Ebenezer Sproat was a man who like the rest of the Sproats, had positive ideas of his own. He took the first emigrant train into what is now the state of Ohio. His wife took the first pianoforte across the Ohio River. We hear Ohio called the "Buckeye State," but how many know the origin of the name? Let me tell it. When the trouble arose with the Indians with the advance of civilization Ebenezer Sproat was appointed commanding chief by the president to look after the Indians. In the first engagement, with a drawn sabre he dismounted and charged the Indians afoot and an Indian called him in the Indian dialect, "Old Buckthorn," which name came from a bush that grew nearly six foot high before a sprout started. The sprout came in the form of an eye and hence the name of "the Buckeye State" came from that Indian, as he nicknamed Ebenezer Sproat.

In the field directly in front of the Sproat house was a locust grove containing nearly 200 trees. About the grove were seats and in the trees were placed boxes for the protection of birds in the winter. In the year 1815 occurred a heavy gale and nearly all these trees were broken down. I have been told that out of the whole lot but 15 were left standing after the storm.

Across th street Gen. Washburn built the "new house" so called, for the occupancy of his employees, especially those who married while in his employ, and it is said that during [illegible] life of the house, 19 young couples began housekeeping there. Gen. Washburn in his day assuredly "did things." This building fell prey to a 4th of July blaze a few years ago.

Mr. Sproat's wife owned an interest in the grist mill and saw mill on the dam. When the saw mill was running, every third day Mr. Sproat was entitled to the slabs. He went down with his hired man, Bill Wright, and found Billy Allen in a rather intoxicated condition, and when the slabs were loaded, Billy came out, tipped up the cart and threw them all out. Mr. Sproat turned to his hired man and said, "It is a mean job to give Billy Allen a licking, but I will give you $1.25 to do it." The hired man immediately went at it, and gave him a good sound drubbing until Mr. Sproat told him to stop. Mr. Sproat paid him for it on the spot, the slabs were reloaded and they went home.

Mr. Sproat died on the 9th day of May, 1864. I, with Joseph Bennett, was with him in his last days. The morning before he passed away the Rev. Mr. Putnam of the Green church came up to call on Mrs. Sproat who was a member of his church. She asked him to go in and ask Mr. Sproat what he thought of the end that was coming to him. He came into the room and said, "Mr. Sproat, you seem to be nearing your end." Mr. Sproat said, "I am." "Well," said the Reverend, "What do you think of meeting your Lord and Master?" The answer was, "In all my business relations in life I never have traded much with the middle man. I have always bought my goods at wholesale. It looks now as though I should see the Lord before you will, and I can no doubt patch it up a good deal better when I get there and see him than I can with you." Mr. Putnam made no reply, but immediately left the room. For once I was silent, as was Mr. Bennett. Soon Mr. Sproat began to talk of those who were coming home from the war, some with an arm gone, some with a leg gone and others with an eye missing, and he said, "I think it is a good time to get through." And then he died.

It was the custom in those days for the people in the outskirts to go to the Green to church. Of a Sunday morning about 9 o'clock the people from my end of the town started for church and when we got to Churchill's corner, where we could look both ways, it seemed as though there was a band of pilgrims headed for some Mecca — in fact it was our Mecca, the down town church. We arrived at the Green in season for the morning service, listened to Dr. Putnam clear up to the 14th and 15th articles of his sermon, and when the church closed were hurried through the vestry to Sabbath school to learn of the building of Solomon's temple and the fall of Nineveh. And when the school closed there was a rush for Bill Davis' pump there to soak out two crackers which were our allowance for lunch. If any time was left before the afternoon service we could go into the cemetery where we had been told again and again by our pastor that we might soon land, and to be ready for it. Or else we might go out to the carriage sheds and watch the horse trades.

There was one family in our neighborhood that didn't go to church at the Green. When Dr. Putnam came up to the old red schoolhouse and preached to those who could not walk those two miles, the members of this family did not go. I asked my grandmother why they didn't mingle with the common people and she said they were Baptists. When I asked her what a Baptist was she told me I would learn that when I got older.

The house is still standing on the land now owned by Ferdinand Landgrebe that was built by one of the tribe of Nemasket Indians and was afterwards owned by Judge Weston. The place was fixed up and my father and mother went housekeeping in it when they were married. My father was the first blacksmith at Muttock and later had charge of the slitting mill in the last of its work. In that old mill was a gallery where people could sit or stand and watch the iron as it went through the cutters.

It was in those days that occurred the Washington reform — you know what I mean — when the temperance question was at its height, and when almost every laboring man took a runlet, which was a little wooden keg in which they carried their toddy, either hard cider or hard liquor. Philander Washburn was an active Washingtonian and every runlet he could find he would kick into the dam. It was a watchword among the workmen, "Philander's coming. Look out for your runlet," and they did.

The grist mill was run by James Warren who was a noted miller. The mill was run for many years and it was to his house that Billy Allen came. Allen was a deserter from the English navy. He made Muttock his home and later became quite a noted character in Middleboro. His cottage stood in the grove of locusts between Nemasket Street and the street that skirts the river, and was known as "Locust Cottage," where he received his friends. He was addicted to overindulgence in liquor, and returning on one of these occasions, being too far gone to recognize his surroundings, he inquired the way to "Mr. Muttock's mills."

The next house to where Mr. Warren lived was the home of Polly Norcutt and her mother. Polly's mother was brought from England and was a servant of Judge Oliver's. In her last days she was obliged to go to the poorhouse. Polly, her daughter, went to care for her mother and there a courtship sprang up between Polly and Daniel Dunham. The question was popped, the answer was in the affirmative, but the overseers of the poor who were prudent and careful men, said that no pauper could be married unless somebody would be responsible for the offspring. Gamaliel Rounseville, a leading man in town, drew up a document which was signed by Joseph H. Bisbee and Alpha Crossman, to the effect that they would be responsible for their care if there should be any offspring. Then Muttock was all alive to the fact that Polly must have a wedding. The neighbors all contributed toward the bridal outfit. Thomas Weston's wife made the wedding cake. A dressmaker in the neighborhood with the assistance of the neighbors made the wedding gown. Some friends gave each a pair of cotton gloves. Rev. Mr. Winchester of the old Methodist church performed the marriage ceremony and there was a serenade that night the like of which I have never heard.

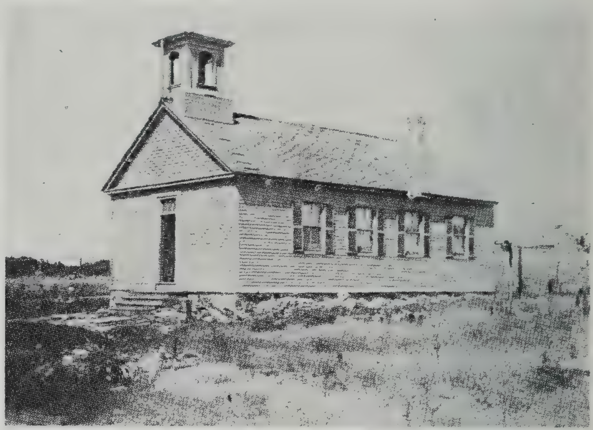
The house now owned by Mrs. James H. Waterman is a part of the store that was occupied by Gamaliel Rounseville. He kept an old fashioned variety store. He was a justice of the peace and a leading man in town government and town meeting. It was said in those days, and I still think he was one of the best assessors the place has ever had. When the town was to be divided and the town of Lakeville set off, he was bitterly opposed to it. In the debate at the last meeting he made a motion that those who were in favor of dividing the town would stand on the south side of the cart rut and those opposed on the north side, until they were counted by the selectmen and the town clerk. I well remember one remark that he made in his debate. He said, "Gentlemen of the town, there is not a man in that end of town (referring to Lakeville) who is capable of doing town business." A man arose from that end of the town and said, "Mr. Rounseville, I live there." Mr. Rounseville was quick with the rejoinder, "I mean you too."

I can see Mr. Rounseville today with his peculiar dress, and with a tall bell-crowned hat which he put on when he got up in the morning and wore until he went to bed. No one dared to take it off except his youngest daughter. As an auditor, case after case came before him, and in that old counting room with an open fireplace and as a rule green firewood, with a good pair of bellows and plenty of newspapers to start the fire, he would sit and hear cases with such men as Tim Coffin, Elnathan Hathaway, and "Squire" Ruggles as counsel, and very few if any verdicts of his were set aside.

The land that lay beyond the Oliver property so called, was the ancestral farm of Gen. Abiel Washburn. Gen. Washburn was a relic of old fashioned English aristocracy and he instilled into his family the same spirit. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Job Peirce, and reared a family of three sons and four daughters. The General's oldest son, Abiel went to New York and became a West India merchant; William R. P. became a prominent lawyer of the Suffolk bar; Philander lingered about, partially using up the aristocracy left by his father when he died.

The old General was a noted farmer. He was emphatically a business man in every respect, a good farmer, a good merchant and a good manufacturer. He and the members of his family didn't mingle with Muttock people, not even with the family of Judge Weston, his partner, and the people in the village didn't care to have anything to do with the General's people. The farm was a well tilled one. Four yoke of oxen did all the work; one horse, "Charlie," was employed in light farm work. A farm wagon was never seen on the premises. The General owned two carriages, one chaise and a family carriage. "Jimmy" was the General's saddle horse, and it was said a harness was never put on him. Mounted on this animal the old General rode from farm to store, from store to mill and thence over the farm again, all day long, with about two hours for nooning.

The head farmer was Asaph Churchill. The man who looked after feeding the cattle was Zorobabel Pratt, known to the boys as "Uncle Zary." These were the steady men employed on the place, although sometimes as many as 20 men were at work, and in haying time the shovel shop was closed down and all hands went into the hay field. In the field known as "the pond field," adjoining the shovel shop where the two oak trees stood, I have seen six men two half days mowing the grass. That was a specimen of his farm work. Good farmers from far and near came to look over the estate. Ev[illegible] field had a different name.



## THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE
## MUTTOCK SCHOOL

This is the little red schoolhouse Mr. Burgess refers to in his article about characters who lived in Middleboro. Th[illegible] schoolhouse stood on a knoll near the old Washburn place, but was moved to the corner of Plymouth and Precinct Streets at the time of the building of the Plymouth & Middleboro Railroad in 1892. The building was over one hundred years old when it was burned to the ground on July 3, 1915.

There was a place in the rear of the old red schoolhouse known as the "great gates." Few people today know the origin of that name. The road known as Precinct Street was originally laid out as a private way and large gates were placed at each end of the thoroughfare. Any one who ever attended school in the old red schoolhouse, with one corner eight feet from the cart rut, will remember that the playground, which was the middle of the road, extended one way as far as the "great gates," and in the other direction to the brook running through what was then known as the "Ichabod Wood farm," and we could play to the foot of the hill.

Between the old Washburn house and the schoolhouse was Gen. Washburn's large orchard, and in apple time we were warned by the teachers not to go as far as there, but we did — sometimes. It was no unusual thing to see 15 acres of corn planted, a large tract of potatoes, rye, oats, turnips, etc. Two meadows, Purchade and Jose, furnished bedding for the General's cattle and a little feed, but as a rule the animals were fed on the best of English hay. The woodland laid largely on Precinct Street. The house occupied by head farmer Churchill stood across from the schoolhouse and was originally the home of Thomas Tupper. Further down stood the "Ellis house" the home of "Uncle Zary," afterwards the summer home of Henry Filister of Boston until the work of destruction in Muttock when it was torn down, being in the line of the Plymouth & Middleboro railroad.

Gen. Washburn died June 17, 1843, of malignant erysipelas, and all the bedding and everything about him was buried. It had been his custom to have the cornhouse key brought to him every night. The morning after his death, Mr. Philander came into the barn and in his dignified manner inquired of Mr. Pratt: "Zorababel, have you fed the cattle?" Mr. Pratt replied, "I have given them a little hay." "How about the grain?" said Philander. "Your father," said Mr. Pratt, "must have taken the cornhouse key with him, for I haven't seen it."

After the General's death the prosperity of the farm seemed to decline immediately. Mr. Philander undertook to look after the farm, but it was utterly beyond him. Upon the death of the General's widow, Abiel, the oldest son, a West India merchant in New York for 30 years, retired from business, returned to the old homestead and undertook to be a farmer. He restocked the farm and to some extent cultivated the fields. He wanted to cut and tear down everything about the place that didn't suit him. The barn, the old store, occupied before the present one, stood across the street, the old store having been used as a tool house. Down it came. I well remember that when he was slashing about with his men, an old apple tree had died which stood near the piazza. The old General's horse, saddled and bridled, had stood there many times waiting his master, and the tree had been kept as a sort of sacred relic. Abiel's maiden sister, Nabby, came to the door as the work of cutting down the tree began and said, "Brother Abiel, father set out that tree." Abiel turned and quick as a flash replied, "Nabby, father is dead and so is the tree," and down it came.

My sister, who has been a religious worker for many years, and who was born in Muttock, once called on Mrs. Washburn for a contribution to home missions. She sent my sister into Mr. Washburn's room to get the money. He made the one dollar, five dollars, and said, "Miss Burgess, sit down. I was a West India merchant in New York for over 30 years. I gave $50 a year to foreign missions and $25 a year to the American Tract Society. Now if you can find another man in New England with more piety than I have, bring him on."

Abiel had a son, Edward Abiel, who became an Episcopal rector. A daughter married a tea merchant, Nye by name, who spent his days in China. Young Abiel inherited some of his father's characteristics, carrying out the old-time idea of having nothing to do with the neighbors. The farm beyond his own was owned by Sylvanus Hinckley. Mr. Hinckley's cattle got into Mr. Washburn's corn. I went and drove the cattle out and put them in Mr. Washburn's yard. Mr. Hinckley came over to see about the damage, and there was talk of referring it to Mr. Sproat. I went after Mr. Sproat who came up. Cornelius B. Wood locked up the store and came along also. Instead of attempting to settle the question of damage each tried to tell which one was the meaner. The battle of words raged very hot, for both stuttered and stammered. Finally Mr. Wood said, "Mr. Sproat, why don't you enter the debate?" Mr. Sproat replied that he looked on with as much indifference as he would to see a skunk and a black snake fight; he didn't care which won. This ended the matter and Mr. Hinckley drove his cattle home.

To refer again to Philander Washburn, he never did anything but what he was obliged to. Whatever property passed out of his hands was forced out. Some property that was taken, I think, by the town for the location of a road, was advertised for sale. The day of the sale came. Mr. Hinckley was the auctioneer. Mr. Philander came up in his dignified manner, he was a good looking man, and said: "Mr. Hinckley, I forbid you selling that land at auction." Mr. Hinckley said: "What are you going to do about it?" Philander said, "Stop it." "I would like to see you do it," retorted Mr. Hinckley. The land was sold. Philander retired, having given vent to his feelings. Philander was offered $11,000 for the water privilege at Muttock, but wouldn't sell. Not that he wanted more money, but somehow he couldn't seem to sell anything. Look at it today. In this connection and to his credit it may be said that Philander Washburn was really the prime mover in the erection of the Central Congregational chapel at the Four Corners. In 1843 there was no public place of worship in the village except the Baptist church, and there were many Congregationalists. Mr. Washburn gave the land for the chapel, and thus was inaugurated the movement for a Congregational church there. Philander's son George inherited some of his father's aristocratic ideas. He married, went abroad, and lived in the far off city of Constantinople, and came back and stood up in our hall and told us he had been obliged to go out of the country to find out there were other people besides the Washburn family.

But to go back to Muttock. With the death of the younger Abiel, William R. P. Washburn, his brother, a lawyer of Boston, retired and came out to conduct the farm. In 1870 he built the large red barn. He stocked up the farm and intended to put it back where his father had it, if possible. His head farmer was John Kelley. Everything started off prosperously, but the end came to him quite suddenly. His family remained awhile on the farm. His son William had charge of the estate, but since then no farming has been done on the place. I have no recollection of any farm that has stood the "skinning" process so long and yielded so well. The "pond field," the pride of the old General, yields nothing now but microbes which flow into the Nemasket river.

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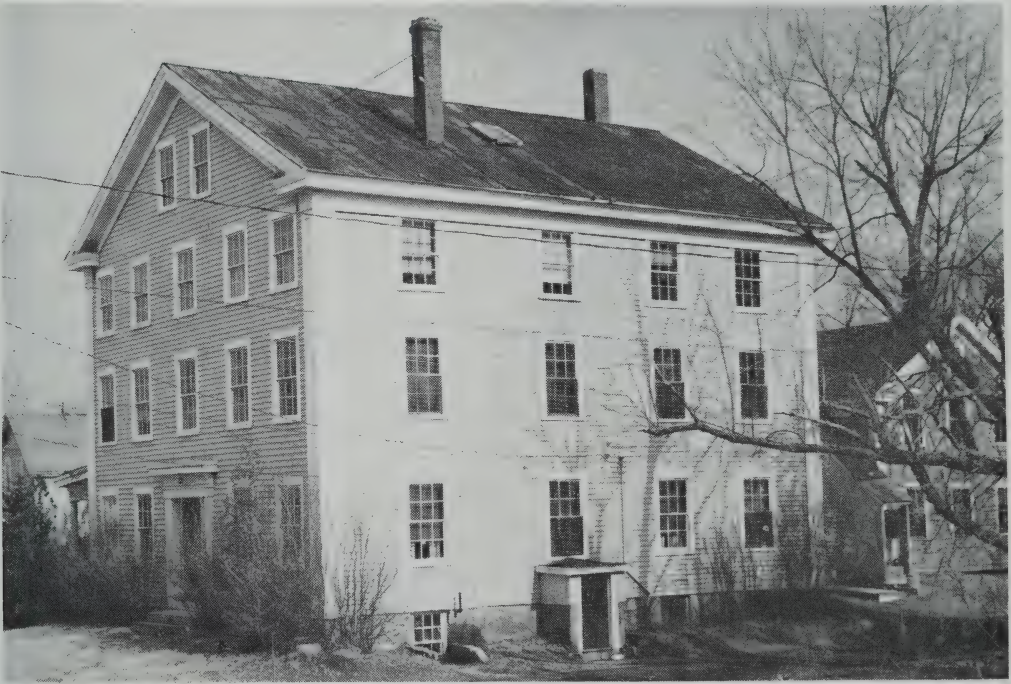

**THE BEEHIVE SCHOOL STREET MIDDLEBOROUGH**

Until 1965, the "Beehive" was one of Middleboro's oldest landmarks. The house must have resembled a beehive during Civil War days when pupils at another of Middleboro's historic buildings, Peirce Academy, used the Beehive as a dormitory. In later years it was occupied by many people at the same time, "roomers" and tenants of small apartments.

For some years the house was the dignified home of Daniel H. Holmes, M.D., his charming wife and sister Laura. Dr. Holmes' medical office was also in the building. After the Doctor's death, the old house began to show its age and its appearance deteriorated rapidly. In 1964 the property was purchased by the Middleboro Parking Trust, a group of merchants organized to create a central parking lot. The house was razed in January, 1965 and the site of the Beehive became a busy parking lot.

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## THE ADVENTURES OF A PIONEER WOMAN

The following information is taken from the book, *Pioneers in Petticoats; Yosemite's Early Women*, 1856-1900, by Shirley Sargent. An autographed copy of the book was presented to the Middleborough Historical Association by Mrs. Madeline Edmonds of Northampton, Massachusetts. Upon receipt of the book, the editor of the Antiquarian corresponded with Miss Sargent and she graciously gave permission to use material from the book in the Middleborough Antiquarian.

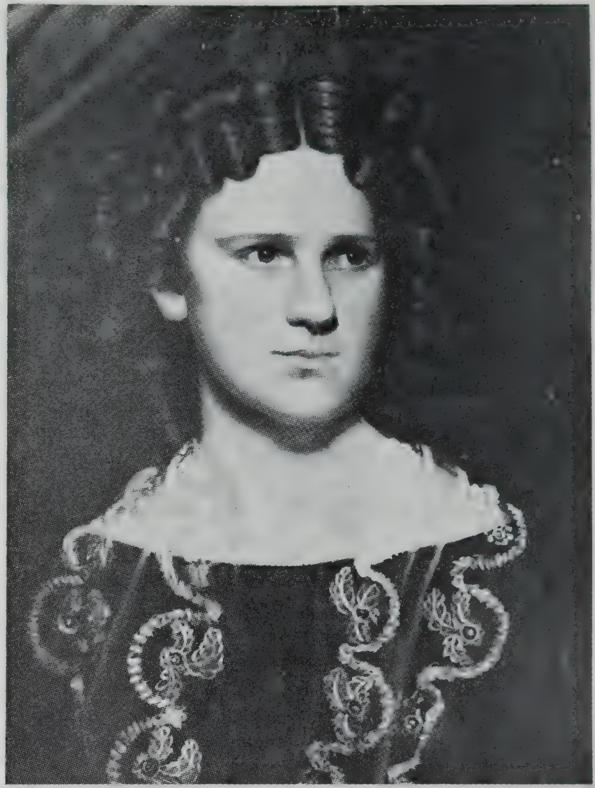
Chapter Five of the book is devoted to the family of Florantha Thompson Sproat, daughter of Olivia Thompson and the portrait painter, Cephas Thompson, a native of Middleboro. Florantha was born in Middleboro, May 14, 1811. The chapter is titled, "Hutchings Harem," having much to do with James M. Hutchings who married Florantha's daughter, Elvira.

Col. Hutchings was a preeminent booster for the Yosemite Valley's beauty, and it was a source of some annoyance to his family that after he died John Muir, the naturalist, received so much praise and attention rather than James Hutchings, the true pioneer of Yosemite Valley. John Muir was at one time sawyer at Hutchings' sawmill and was a close friend of the family.

In April, 1838, Florantha married Granville T. Sproat of Middleboro, well known to Middleboro residents in later years as author of a great number of nostalgic articles that appeared in the Middleboro Gazette in the late 1880's. From the time of their marriage until 1845 Mr. Hutchings taught in an Indian Mission school in Wisconsin. Florantha had no artistic bent beyond a love of cooking. In Wisconsin she spent much of her time cooking; one New Year's she boasted of baking between 200 and 300 cakes for the Indians who might call that day.

During this period, Florantha gave birth to three children: the first stillborn, the second a girl named Elvira after Florantha's older sister, and another named Lucy. Leaving Wisconsin, the Sproats returned to Middleboro, but in 1854 left on a stormy voyage to San Francisco where Florantha put her talent for cooking to good use and ran several boarding houses. While Middleboro residents were to hear much from Mr. Sproat, Florantha was not so fortunate as her husband drifted away and left her with the responsibility of bringing up the two daughters.

Living in her boarding house was James M. Hutchings, the Yosemite pioneer, and when daughter Elvira was seventeen years old, Hutchings married her. Like her great-grandfather, Cephas Thompson, her aunt Marietta, and her uncles Cephas Giovanni and Jerome, Elvira painted, putting on canvas the beauty of the Yosemite. She gave birth to a daughter, Florence, nicknamed Floy, who was the first white child born in the Yosemite. There were two other children, a girl named Gertrude, called "Cosie," and a boy who had a deformed back which, however, did not prevent him in adult years from surveying mountains and leading a very active life.



Florantha Thompson Sproat as a girl in a portrait painted by her father, Cephas Thompson.

From book, *Pioneers in Petticoats,* by Shirley Sargent.

Florence, or Floy, was the tomboy of the family. She rode bareback, hiked far into the mountains camping alone at night. Sometimes when a stagecoach drew up in front of the boarding house, the passengers were greeted by Floy, astride a spirited horse, dressed in knee-high boots, a flowing cape and a broad brimmed hat. As the horse reared up on its hind legs, Floy would wave her hat and cry out, "Welcome, welcome," and the sound of her voice was the first indication the passengers had that this was a girl.

Floy met a tragic death, the details of which were never made clear. One version related that while climbing a mountain, rocks were dislodged and fatally injured her. Her funeral took place in the "Big Tree Room" of Hutchings' Hotel.

This "Big Tree Room" was part of a large addtiion Mr. Hutchings added to his hotel. He could not bear to cut down an immense cedar tree that stood in the way, so he built the addition around it. Florantha Sproat, still the cook in the hotel, hung her pots and pans on nails driven into the trunk of the tree.

Mr. Hutchings was continually in conflict with Commissioners of the Yosemite Grant, drawn up to protect the region. Mr. Hutchings battled the authorities, State and

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Federal, until in 1875 he was evicted from his Yosemite land claims. He and his family with Mrs. Sproat moved to her home in San Francisco. At this time, Elvira left her husband, but strangely enough, Hutchings and the two children remained with Elvira's mother. Elvira died eleven years later at her sister Cosi's home in Vermont. Cosie had married William E. Mills, a rancher of good New England stock. For a time they lived in Washington state, but in 1907 moved to Waitsfield, Vermont.

However, Cosie was to reappear in the Yosemite. In 1941 she arrived in a panel truck and silver haired Cosie was the driver. She camped at the site of her father's log cabin. Seventy-three years old, she swam in the cold streams and hiked the mountain trails. She continued to do so until she reached the age of eighty. Eventually she was persuaded to return east to live with her children. She died May 20, 1956.

In an old scrap book there is a clipping that tells of Col. J.M. Hutchings giving a series of lectures on the Yosemite Valley at Tremont Temple in Boston. This seems to have been about 1891. He married twice after Elvira left him, the first time to a neighbor, Augustus Ladd Sweetland. Mrs. Sproat was still in charge of the family and evidently welcomed her daughter's successor. His third wife was an Englishwoman, Emily Ann Edmunds. Hutchings himself met a violent death when in 1902 he was killed when thrown from a carriage on a camping trip. After having been evicted from the Yosemite Valley, in 1880 conditions changed and he was appointed Guardian of Yosemite Valley, returning in triumph to the Valley and his old hotel.

Florantha Thompson Sproat remained in charge of the family through the years both in Yosemite and in San Francisco. As Cosie once said of her grandmother, "she was a homemaker, cook, spinner of yarn, knitter of stockings in our home as long as she lived." Florantha's home in San Francisco burned in 1880 but was rebuilt during her lifetime. She died on April 28, 1883, having spent most cf her life as a pioneer woman in the Far West.

## AN OLD TIME SKATING RINK IN MIDDLEBORO

At a time when there is a revival of interest in indoor skating and the fact that the youth of Middleboro have to go out of town in order to enjoy the sport, it is interesting to note that once upon a time there was a skating rink in the center of Middleboro. It stood adjacent to what is Union Street today, in a lot toward Union Street in back of what was the old High School building which eventually became Bates School, burned in September, 1954. An issue of the Middleboro Gazette of 1879 mentions the fact that "Last Saturday evening more than 200 persons were present at the skating rink."

In 1884, when George Lewis Soule was one of the promoters of the George Woods Organ Company and was unsuccessful in raising money to build a factory on Cambridge Street, Mr. Soule purchased the old skating rink and at his own expense used the lumber to build the factory.

## SCHOOL NOTES, 1907

The total school enrollment including Pratt Free School is 1,369.

Rev. William D. Goble will give the next talk in the High School series on "The Mountain Whites."

Mrs. Florence Dean Smith substituted for Mr. Flanders at the School Street School building on November 5th.

Miss Cook, Supervisor of drawing, visited a manual training exhibition of the Malden schools last Friday.

Supervisor Howard recently inspected the music work at the Bridgewater Normal School, visiting different grades in the model school.

Grade 8, School Street School, is the largest elementary school and South Middleboro the largest suburban school. There are 357 pupils in the new School Street School.

The pupils of the Waterville school under the direction of their teacher, Miss Christene Pratt, held a very successful school fair at the schoolhouse last Friday. The proceeds will be used for school decorations.

A coal stove has been placed in the Purchade School. This is one of the stoves formerly used on the third floor of the High School building. The Purchade stove has replaced the one at Nemasket. The price of wood being so high it is now much cheaper to burn coal.

The school in the West Side building are well filled this term, the two rooms on the upper floor having a membership of 44 and 42 respectively. As these rooms are planned for only 42 pupils it is evident that any great increase in the school population would necessitate an enlargement of the building.

The financial statement of the school department for the year 1907 to November 7 is as follows: Salaries, $17,967; janitors, $1,621; fuel, $2,080; books and supplies, $1,660.29; printing, $170.54; sundries, $425.85; transportation, $1,415.24; repairs, $993.50; rent, $300; insurance, $648; tuition, $18.50.

## IN MEMORIAM

Mr. William Waugh, a long time member of the Middleborough Historical Association, passed away in April, 1976. He was especially interested in Middleborough history and contributed many articles to the Middleborough Antiquarian.

A gift of ten dollars in his memory has been made to the Middleborough Historical Museum, a gift made by the "Dascoulias twins" as members of Mr. Waugh's high school class of 1941, Middleboro High School. The gift was received by the Museum through the courtesy of Mr. Waugh's mother, Mrs. Ruth L. Waugh.

## DEBORAH SAMPSON

*A new booklet about "Debbie the Reb."*

Miss Pauline Moody of Sharon, Massachusetts, has just completed an informative booklet entitled, "Massachusett's Deborah Sampson." The booklet has been several years in preparation and Miss Moody has done extensive research on this young woman who masqueraded as a man and fought with the Revolutionary Army. Copies are on sale at the Middleborough Historical Museum at $2.00 each.

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

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in

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Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

This has been a year for looking backward as the newspapers and television have very consistently directed our attention to the events of 1776. But other years and other events have been recorded and have become part of our history.

Some of you older readers will remember George Delmar Dorr who lived on Bedford Street in North Middleborough. Usually called "Del" he was at all times interested in anything historical. An old notebook in which he recorded disastrous fires makes interesting reading. The ones relating to Middleborough and North Middleborough oftentimes give the details such as the time of day, the owner of the property as well as what was burned.

"On April 11th, 1889 a forest fire burned over about 100 acres of woodland in North Middleborough, Mass. Mr. Daniel Aldrich was burning some brush and the fire got away from him."

Stephen Richmond, who died of smallpox in 1777 once lived in a house on Vernon Street which in 1906 was occupied by Daniel Aldrich. Stephen, by the way, had Tory inclinations.

On the 15th of April 1889 North Middleborough had another fire. This time it was "Miss Lucy Robinson's house caught fire 20 minutes past five o'clock P.M. Keith and Pratt Shop hands put it out, slight damage to attic and roof." Del Dorr worked at Keith & Pratt's at one time. We might speculate that he was 'one of the hands' who went to Miss Robinson's rescue. Because of the reference to the shoe shop we know that this residence was on Pleasant Street.

A year later, on December 13th, 1890, "A large two-horse load of furniture owned by Fred Weatherby was burned near the State Farm on Titicut Street Bridge over the Taunton River on the North Middleboro side."

It was on December 4, 1891 that "Frank Davis barn on Plymouth Street, North Middleboro, Mass. was burned. George Taylor got the horse and cow out."

March 15th, 1893 "The Cong. Church on Plymouth St., North Middleboro, Mass. was struck by lightning at one o'clock A.M. and burned." This was the third church that has stood on this site. One of them was burned on Sunday morning Feb. 28, 1852."

"Saturday, Nov. 25th, 1893, Charles Dunham's house and barn on the corner of Pleasant and Center Streets, North Middleboro, Mass. was burned at 7 P.M."

Miss Lucy Robinson seems to have had continuing bad luck for on "April 3rd, 1894, Miss Lucy Robinson's house in North Middleboro, Mass. was destroyed by fire at 10 o'clock A.M. The barn was saved by shop hands. Bridgewater and Middleboro fire engines came but the fire was under control before they got here."

April 13th, 1895 "Mrs. Brown's house on Pleasant Street, North Middleboro, Mass. burned at half past two o'clock P.M.

May 18th, 1895, "Mr. Henry Cushman's barn and shop on his old farm on Vernon Street, North Middleboro, Mass. burned about 5 oc. P.M."

Aug. 31st, 1896, "Mr. Isaac Macomber's barn on Vernon Street, North Middleboro, Mass. burned at 5:30 oc. A.M. Accidently set by Mr. Macomber."

Sept. 16, 1897 "Frank P. Cole's barn on Plymouth Street, North Middleboro, Mass. was burned about 12 o'clock P.M. It stood near the blacksmith shop and brook."

October, 1898, "Mr. Seth Eaton's barn on Whites Hill, Plymouth Street, North Middleboro, Mass. was burned with contents about 4 o'clock A.M. either the 26th or 27th." I wonder if he was the Seth Eaton who was one of the early rural mail carriers when the postoffice was moved to the Peirce building?

Jan. 8th, 1899, "The Frank Brooks place on Whites Hill, Plymouth Street, North Middleboro, Mass. burned this morning."

May 27th, 1899, "The Cyrus Eaton house and barn on Plymouth Street, North Middleboro, Mass., and by the side of the Taunton River was destroyed by fire between 11 and 12 o'clock P.M." Was he related to Seth Eaton?

June 9th, 1899, "Forest fire back of A.L. Dorr's on Bedford Street." This was Amos Leonard Dorr's place which later became the home of Leon and Georgianna (Dorr) Townsend. Amos Leonard Dorr was father of George Delmar Dorr.

Aug. 21st, 1899, Monday — "The Post Office and Elliot Brothers store in North Middleboro, Mass. burned at 8:25 P.M. The building was owned by Nathan Pratt, he lived in the second story. Pratt lost all his household goods and clothing. The supposed cause of the fire was the falling of a large lamp that is said to have set the floor on fire. The chemical engine came from the center a distance of five miles in 25 minutes, the house next to the store owned by Percy Keith and occupied by Mr. Arad Dunham was damaged several dollars but was saved by the men of this place by the use of buckets of water . . . the loss estimated at $5000 partially insured."

When events are recorded in a notebook or diary the records become of major importance to the genealogist and historian. Since they are written at the time of the event the details are apt to be fact and not something less accurate and written from memory.

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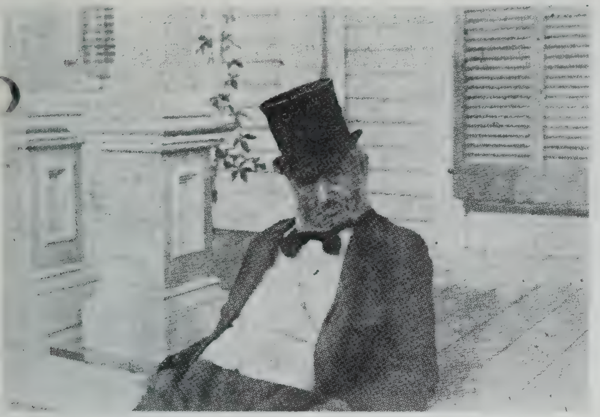

## ALBERT G. PICKENS

Copy of portrait of Eleanor Huestin
of Plymouth

Painted by Cephas Thompson

Albert G. Pickens lived on South Main Street in a house that was directly across from the site of one of the oldest homes in Middleboro, the Morton house built following King Philip's War in 1675. The old Morton house was torn down in 1868 when South Main Street was widened and straightened. Mr. Pickens owned the Morton house at that time and considered it too old and fragile to be moved, so it was torn down and the lumber sold and used for a house on Crossman Avenue. Mr. Pickens lived in what in later years was known as the Arthur E. Jenney place on the corner of South Main and Prospect Streets. In the recent development of South Main Street which has converted the street from one of the handsomest residential streets of the town to a succession of gasoline stations, the house was moved back from the street and has remained vacant for several years, boarded up and abandoned to the elements, a sad relic of better days.

Mr. Pickens was a gentleman of the old school as his picture indicates. He was an accomplished pianist and taught piano-forte at Peirce Academy as well as classes of private pupils. He never married and lived alone in his South Main Street house from the middle 1860's to 1902.

## CORRECTION PLEASE

In the last issue of the Antiquarian there was included a flyer giving information regarding a new book sponsored by the Middleborough Historical Association, "Cannonballs and Cranberries." An error appeared in the address to which orders for the book were to be sent. Some orders reached their destination, but some were returned to the sender. In future orders, the words, "Middleborough Historical Museum" should be written above the address on the order. This will insure delivery to the Treasurer of the Museum.

## HISTORY OF THE WESTON "GREAT CHAIR"

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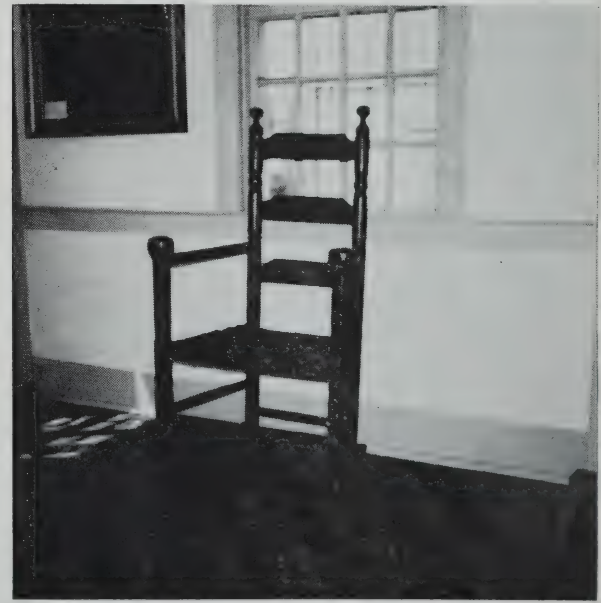
THOMAS WESTON
Duxbury 1726-1776
married Mary Southworth (1723-1765)
in Duxbury ca 1752
THOMAS WESTON, JR.
Duxbury 1760-1842
married Abiah Fish (1766-1842)
in Marshfield Feb. 4, 1786
DURA WESTON
Middleboro 1788-1863
married first wife, Olive W. Faunce
in Kingston, Aug. 1, 1815
second wife, Bethia (?) Sampson Ford
in Duxbury, May, 1824
ELLIS WESTON
Middleboro 1828-1886
married Abigail Barrows Robbins
in Middleboro April 14, 1850
CHESTER ELWOOD WESTON
Middleboro 1868-1942
married Flora G. Thomas (1868-1959)



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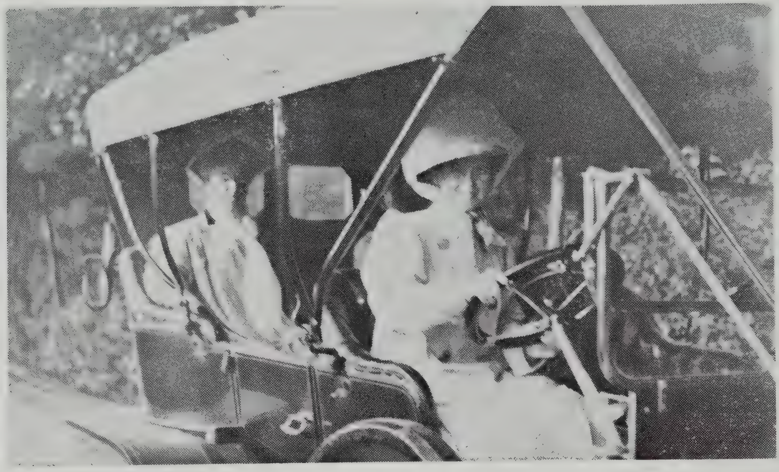
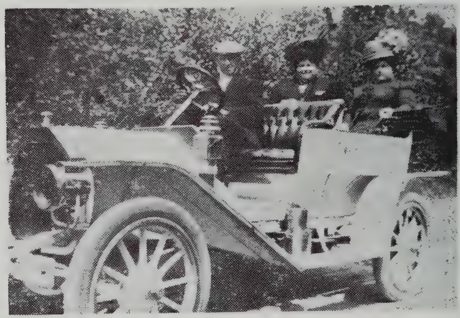
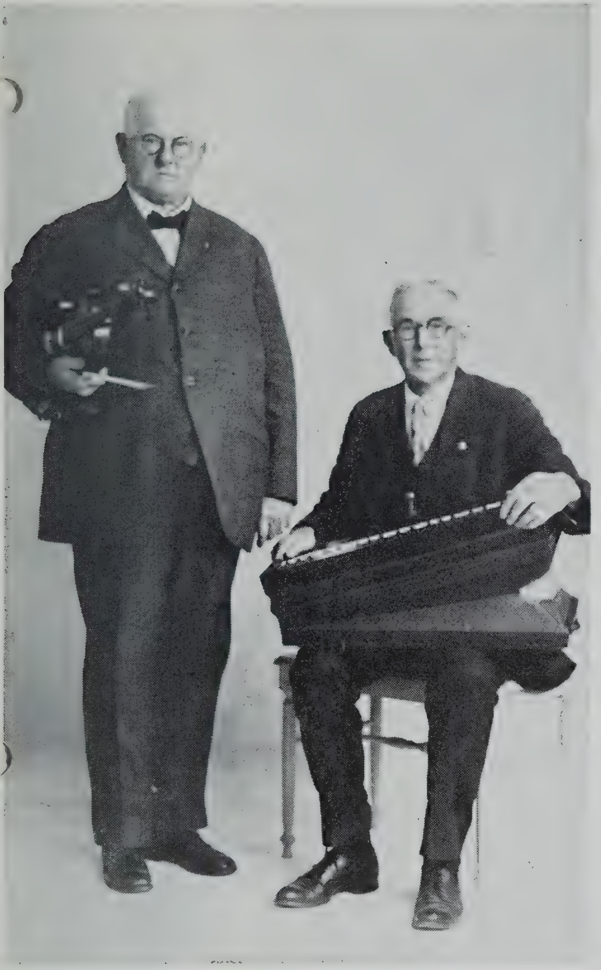
## AUTOMOBILES
## AS SEEN ABOUT MIDDLEBORO STREETS
## FIFTY YEARS AND MORE AGO



JESSE MORSE, HIS WIFE ALBERTA
AND HER SISTER BLANCHE SALLES





Chester E. Weston (Left) and J. Herbert Cushing with lap organ. The two men appeared often before local audiences delighting them with their old-time music.

## AN OLD LAP ORGAN

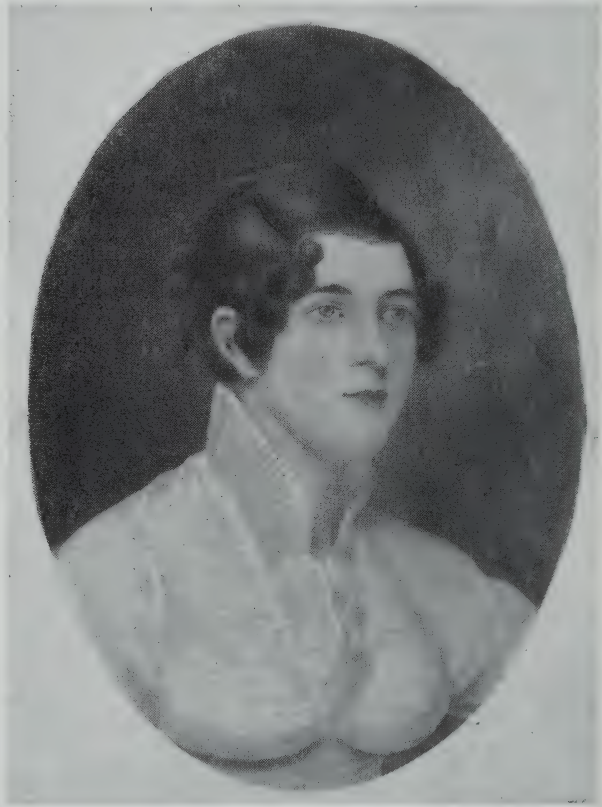
The accompanying picture shows Chester E. Weston with his fiddle and J. Herbert Cushing, both of Middleboro, with an ancient musical instrument known variously as a "lap organ," "elbow organ," "rocking organ," "church organ," "teeter melodeon," and "Seraphine."

In an old scrapbook owned by Mr. Cushing's daughter-in-law, there appears an article on this type of organ written by Charles A. King. His interest in the subject was stimulated by the discovery in Plymouth, New Hampshire, of a similar instrument about which the owners could give little information.

Mr. Clark's search led him to a group of makers of the instrument in Concord, New Hampshire, consisting of "Deacon" A. Prescott, D. B. Bartlett, David M. and Andrew P. Dearborn. Inquiry also led him to a maker in North Bridgewater (now Brockton) Massachusetts, whose name was Caleb Packard, a contemporary of the Concord group. The earliest date Mr. King could attach to one of the organs was 1837. This organ was made by a Mr. Bazin of Canton, Massachusetts. A similar organ was owned by a family in Nebraska, bearing the name of D. B. Bartlett, Concord, New Hampshire. Mr. Bartlett's name appears in the Concord directory of 1844 only. Kingman's History of North Bridgewater states that Caleb Packard began to make "lap organs" in 1839 and was the first to use piano keys on the instruments.

By 1859, the design of the lap organ had been improved to become a pedal melodeon, many of which are found stored in attics. This, in turn, led to the reed parlor organ which had to be pumped by foot pedals, and was found in most home parlors in the middle and late 1800's.

The lap organ in the accompanying photograph was made by Mr. Packard, still owned by the Cushing family, and is probably all of 125 years old.



The photograph from which this illustration is made is beautifully tinted in pastel colors. The portrait was sold by Elmer Drew, antique dealer, to someone in Plymouth, but eventually it came into the possession of Miss Eleanor Barden of Middleboro, a descendant. The photograph with the above information was given to the Middleborough Historical Association by the late Mrs. Herbert S. Sylvester, who had seen and admired the portrait.

# THE STORY OF JACK MOREY AND HIS SISTER HANNAH

## Who lived in Middleboro sixty years ago

(*This article appeared in the Middleboro Gazette in* 1879. *Therefore the Moreys lived in Middleboro in* 1819)

Mr. Editor: I noticed in your paper sometime within the past year an article from your New York Correspondent in which Washburn's Store at Muttock was referred to, and the name of Jack Morey mentioned. That was the first time I had ever seen Jack's name in print, and I supposed that both Jack and his sister Hannah had long since been forgotten. Jack was one of the characters of that time. He was a man when I was a small boy, and was a particular friend of mine — while I also was a particular friend of his. When quite young I spent most of my time at Jack's, while not at school; helped him to pick stones, turned the grindstone for him, drove the cows, helped spread hay, etc., for which I received a fourpence ha-penny or ninepence, which was carefully laid away for "Muster." Jack owned the farm adjoining the one on which I was born, and my grandfather, Captain Nathaniel Wilder, who died in 1825, aged 81 years, was an adviser for Jack in regard to his business matters, and a sort of barometer to indicate the weather prospects during haymaking time. Jack's sister, Hannah, was his housekeeper. She was a short, thickset lady; was not brilliant intellectually — and indeed some people considered her a little soft, or "slacked baked." Although Hannah was a splendid housekeeper, and as thrifty as could be, I never knew of her having any beaux. Although Jack was not a church goer, Hannah was a constant attendant, and was a first class sleeper, especially in warm weather; and by way of parenthesis, if this could meet the eye of the lady who one time pricked Hannah with a pin during services, thereby causing her to awaken and utter a shrill scream in the midst of one of the Rev. Emerson Paine's most affecting passages, it will no doubt remind her of one of the very naughty performances of her girlish days.

Jack always had the fattest of hogs, and could always supply a neighbor with a piece of nice pork for the baked beans. He also kept several splendid cows. Jack was very particular in curing his hay, and would never allow it to get a drop of rain upon it. He did not mow himself, but hired experts to do it for him, and usually hired them three or four months before the haying season, with the understanding that they would be on hand when he would be ready for them. On the arrival of the men in the morning after being notified, Jack would ask them as to their opinion of the weather, and if they expressed doubts as to it being a good hay day, Jack would tell them to sit down and wait till he would see Capt. Wilder about it. He would then take across the fields — about half a mile — on a run, and if on his arrival the old gentleman was not up yet, Jack would have him called forthwith, and then they would go out together, and look at the sky and grandfather, after observing which way the wind was, would perhaps tell Jack he thought it was just a little foggy and would perhaps clear up in a short time and be a good day. Jack would then start back on a run, and long before he would get to the men, would commence hallooing for them to get to mowing — "it is not agoing to rain today. Captain Wilder says it won't."

Jack was very peculiar in his habits; he took a notion at one time that he would not have his hair cut any more, and he allowed it to grow until it hung away down over his shoulders. For a time he kept it combed, but after a while [illegible] got so long that it took too much time and besides was quite a painful operation, so he let it go until it got into a solid matted mass. One Spring Jack hired me to help him work out his tax on the road, for which he was to pay me twenty-five cents a day. The second day we were working between the lower factory — now Star Mills — and Muttock, nearly opposite the farm of Mr. Albert Thomas, and during the forenoon the men plotted to catch Jack at noontime, hold him and shear him. I overheard the plan and on our way home for dinner told Jack what was up. He felt very bad about it and asked me what I thought he had better do. I advised him to have the hair cut off before returning and thereby get ahead of the conspirators. Jack then asked me if I could do the business for him; I answered that I could, and on our arrival home he got the sheep shears and we went out under a tree where I trimmed him out in good shape, the hair coming off all in one mat, not unlike the pad of a saddle. Jack's appearance was changed very much. When we went back after dinner we found the men sitting in the shade, under an apple tree, with all the tools necessary to do the work, but the job was done. They looked and winked at each other awhile, and then one of the men called me to one side and asked me if I had sheared Jack. I told him I had, and the man then turned to the crowd remarking, "that boy will come to something yet." Jack gave me twenty-five cents extra for that day.

Both Jack and Hannah were kindly, honest, inoffensive people. I knew them well up to about 1825, when I left that section of country, and knew nothing of them since that, more than that they have now been dead many years.

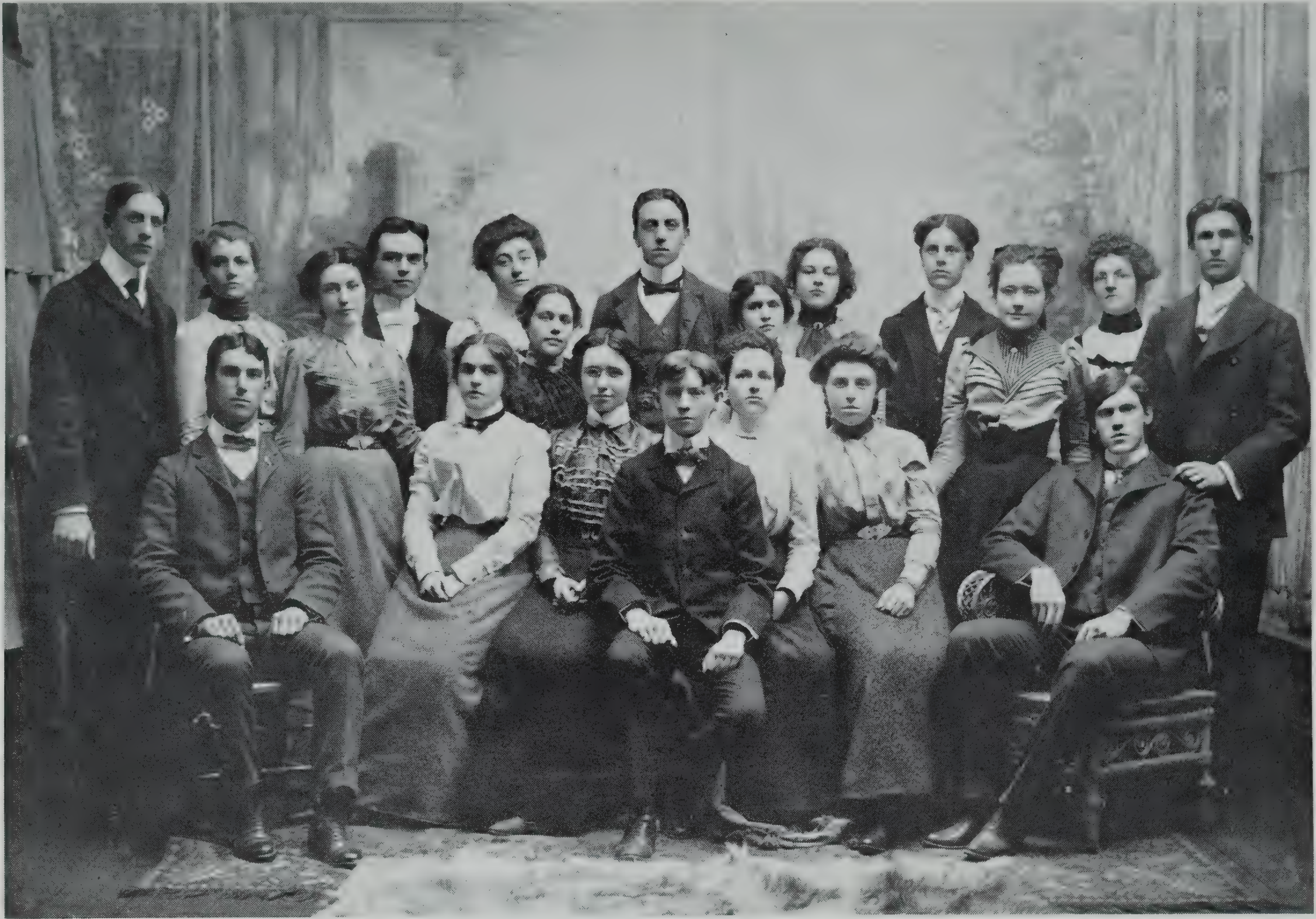
And now, Mr. Editor, perhaps you may think in looking over the foregoing, that there is not much in it worthy of note. I will agree with you in that. It may probably interest no one except those living now who lived then. To them, however, it will bring recollections of some of the incidents of their early life. To me these old matters are very interesting and one great reason why I am a subscriber to and admirer of your paper is that your correspondents furnish and you publish so many articles relative to "ye olden times."

I have thought that at some future time I would write from recollection some of the incidents of what were the pleasures of the boys that were boys sixty years ago; what we called the "big days," such as May Training, Fourth of July with music and patriotic orations, the Musters at the Maxim ground, the Thanksgivings and corn huskings in the fall, which latter usually wound up with a skunk hunt.

Yours,
S. Wilder

New Castle, Pa., Dec. 22, 1879

*We are indebted to Mrs. Aymar Gates for this article. Mrs. Gates' memory goes back a long way. She remembers that the Wilders lived on East Main Street in a house between what is now the Lyman Butler home and a small pond toward the Green. Across the street were the fields in which the haying was done. In those fields has been built a modern housing development. One of the streets in this development has been named "Wilder Street," doubtless for the same Wilder family.*



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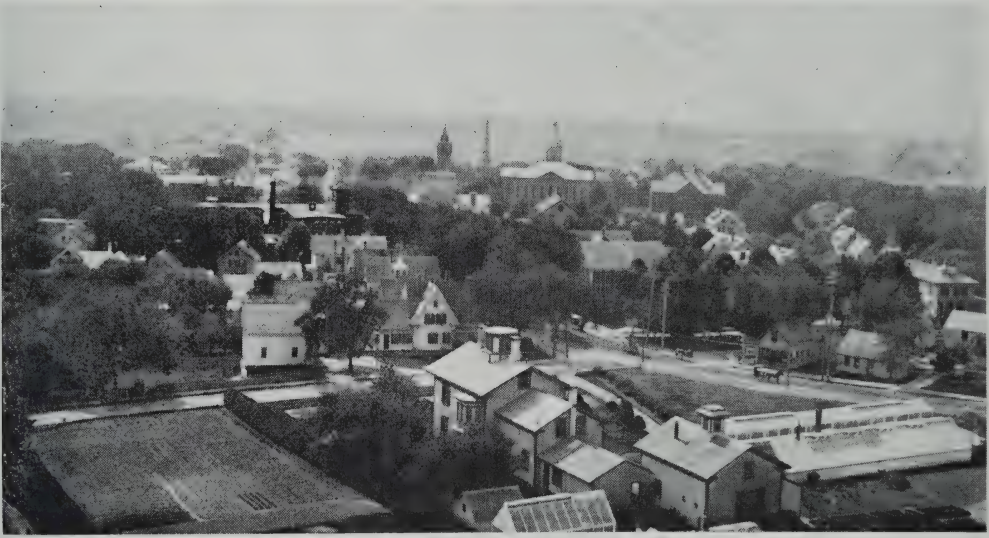

**MIDDLEBORO ca 1850**

In the center foreground is the C. D. Kingman house and greenhouses where now stands St. Luke's Hospital. Across Oak Street can be seen the Washburn (Bassett) House, with the Town Hall and churches in the background.

Courtesy of Miriam A. Bassett

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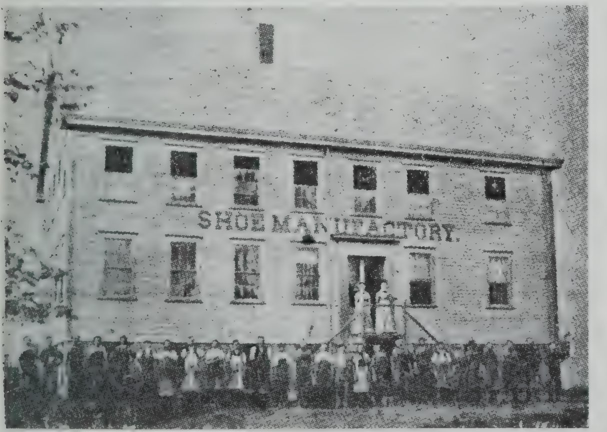
## OAK AND CENTER STREETS — AS THEY USED TO BE

by Miriam A. Bassett

I remember spending many happy moments talking with Helen Kingman about our ancestors who were neighbors. Helen was a descendant of the Kingman family and I of the Washburn family. Helen gave me the picture on the cover of this issue of the Antiquarian, a bird's eye view of Middleboro probably about 1850. In the foreground is the home of C. D. Kingman, where St. Luke's Hospital now stands. In the rear of this house on Forest Street was the home of Charles W. Kingman, Helen's father where he lived with his wife, three daughters, Cordelia, Sarah, Helen, and a son, Walter Kingman.

Perhaps not many people know that after Calvin Kingman retired from the shoe business, he became a florist, his greenhouses seen in this picture. Helen said he was proud of the variety of roses he grew, his unusual plants and the row of beautiful beech trees, still standing. He was very successful and was said to be first florist in Middleboro. After his death, his widow, Mary (Pickens) Kingman, continued the business with Frank Gibbs as manager. Later Mr. Gibbs bought the greenhouses and moved them to his home on Forest Street. His daughter Florence worked with him and learned the trade of florist. She later conducted a florist shop on Center Street.

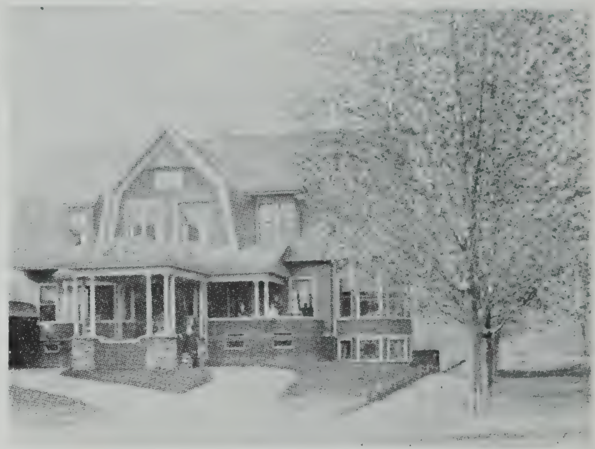
Across Oak Street on the corner of Oak and Center stood the home of Peter Washburn, founder of the present C. P. Washburn Company. The house was surrounded by an iron fence and stone posts, and joining the house were a carriage house and barn. Mr. Washburn lived there with his wife, Mary Parker Washburn, and his two daughters, Mary Lizzie and Ella Maria, and his son Charles Parker Washburn.



**THE KINGMAN SHOE FACTORY**

Center Street, Next to "The Maples."

The shoe business was carried on by C. D. Kingman and his sons, Philip and Charles W. Kingman. The concern did an extensive business after the Civil War, making brogans for the southern trade. The wooden business block on Center Street known as the "Cushing Block" was remodeled from one of the shoe factory buildings.



**THE MAPLES**

Corner Oak and Center Streets.

Home of J. Herbert Cushing and family. Mr. Cushing conducted a fish market here, known as the "Christian Hill Fish Market." The business was established in 1840 by Mr. Cushing and his son, who succeeded his father in 1881. The Cushings also conducted a branch market at 3 Water (Wareham) Street.

Accross Center Street on the corner of Oak and Center was a grove of maple trees and in the picture one can see the roof of a large building. This was the attractive home of Josiah Herbert Cushing and his wife Harriet (Wilbur) Cushing, who was an artist and gave painting lessons. They had a family consisting of a daughter Irena and three sons: Bert, Walter and Stearns. The home was called the "Maples," and to the east of it stood a part of the Kingman Shoe Manufactory. In this picture it had become the Cushing Block where many social activities were held.

On the opposite corner of Oak and Center Streets stood a grocery store and in our memory was owned by a Mr. Nichols.

Now as I go down Center Street I notice many changes. I miss Mr. Cushing's lovely home, but we can be proud of the other corners; what would we do without St. Luke's Hospital, the Sacred Heart Church and the Sacred Heart School?

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XVII 1976 Number 4
Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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## MIDDLEBORO'S LAST WATER POWER MILL

Although all mills were powered by water wheels for [illegible] years, all turned to steam and later gasoline engines while modern mills rely on electric motors. At the turn of the century what was known as T. Leonard Sawmill was on Poquoy Brook at what is now the Lakeville line at the junction of Mill and Harding Streets. The roadway made a dike to hold water in a reservoir like so many mills of the time which was prior to 1857. Walling's map shows two mills on this site, a grist mill and a shingle mill which was the forerunner of the long log mill of some years later. Around 1910, Lyman Osborne and Will Dunham purchased the property from Theodore Leonard. Mr. Osborne wanted the water rights for the bogs he owned. The mill had been enlarged at this time and was a long log mill. A twenty-five horsepower Chase turbine water wheel was used to turn the saw. A head of water with an eight foot drop gave power enough through the winter months as they figured on sawing from the tenth of October to the tenth of April.

A few years later William Dunham sold his half to Roy Huntley. In 1930, the mill was destroyed by fire. The machinery was ruined but the water wheel was not hurt except for the top gears which were made of wood. Lyman and sons, Irving and Lawrence Osborne, being carpenters, rebuilt the mill with lumber sawed out on the new machinery and new gears were made by Chester Fuller. After the fire, Roy Huntley sold his share to Mr. Osborne. At this time Lawrence was co-owner with his father.

He, like so many other mill workers, was hurt on two occasions. One time he lost a finger and another severely ruptured himself. Logs were handled by brute strength and many a mill worker got sprains or strains. Lawrence had been working around the mill since the eighth grade so he knew the business well. Custom sawing was the main business though logs were cut and hauled to the mill by Irving with his own truck. These were sawed and sold to any one needing lumber.

**LYMAN OSBORNE SAWMILL**

The last water power mill in

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The last time I visited the mill in the thirties, Irving was working with his father. Lyman sold out to Maurice Washburn and was sawyer for him till the mill closed down in the late forties. Lawrence told about the times after World War I when the mill was cleared out and square dances held.

In early days the sawdust dropped directly into the brook and worked down stream for miles. Fishermen complained that the fish were eating the dust instead of insects and flies and definitely were not getting fat on it, they were even dying. Eventually a blower was put in and the dust was blown out to a pile on the lot.

As much as two hundred and fifty feet of lumber was sawed in a season and a cord of logs sawed out to five or six hundred feet, so a lot of sawdust was made.

Thanks to Irving and Lawrence Osborne for their help in making this article possible.

## BELATED IDENTIFICATION

As often happens, after a picture is printed in the Antiquarian someone comes up with the identification of those in the picture. So it was with the photographs of antique cars in the last issue. In the car at the top of the page were Mrs. Myra (Leonard) Tillson driving, with her mother, Mrs. Cornelius Leonard in the rear seat. In the photograph at the bottom of the page were Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Bearse, the driver unidentified.

## A WORD TO THE WISE

The Middleborough Historical Museum is a worth while institution that encourages bequests for its support and maintenance. In order for the Museum to benefit by such bequests, it is necessary that the following words be inserted in the will: FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL MUSEUM. The Museum is not an incorporated body, therefore bequests cannot be left directly to the Museum. The Middleborough Historical Association, of which the Museum is a part, is incorporated. If the words, "for the benefit of the Middleborough Historical Museum," are not included in the will, the bequest intended for the Museum will be put into the general treasury of the Association without direct benefit to the Museum. The Museum attempts to be self-supporting and welcomes any monetary gifts.

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES
of
Olde Middleborough
in
Plymouth County
Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*
*Certified Genealogist*

In 1620 when the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth the area which became Middleborough was occupied by a tribe of Indians known as the Nemaskets. In 1669 some of the land became incorporated as the town of Middleborough. Since the land originally was considered as a part of Plymouth, many of the first settlers came of Pilgrim stock. Therefore, many of the present day 'old families' can trace their ancestry to passengers on the Mayflower.

But Middleborough (or Middleberry as it was called earlier) settlers . . . as in every area . . . ventured away from home into territory that was some distance away. One such trek led a number of families north into Vermont into a town known as Woodstock in Windsor County.

In 1760 the French and Indian Wars had ended and in 1761 some sixty (60) townships were granted within the present limits of the state of Vermont. Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire ordered a survey for some sixty (60) miles along the Connecticut River bordering his own province of New Hampshire. He then laid out the townships in approximately six (6) mile squares. On 10 July 1761 a grant was made to David Page and others of the acreage which later was the village or township of Woodstock.

Little was done to settle the township for several years owing to the duplicate claims to the land made by both the New York and the New Hampshire governors. The controversy continued for a number of years and several land speculators found it very opportune to buy up the rights of other grantees. The shrewdness of Oliver Willard resulted in his becoming the sole owner of the land which was called Woodstock, Vermont.

By 1772 the controversial property was granted as the town of Woodstock under the great seal of the state of New York. Many of these first settlers were from western Massachusetts and New York and Connecticut. A bit later as the settlers continued to arrive to take up their land rights we begin to find names familiar to our Middleborough area as Barrows . . . Ebenezer, James and Thomas . . . and it was James who made the purchase of a 100-acre lot in the west part of town on 20 December in 1781. The Randalls bought land from Delano, Samson and Samuel Fuller. George Samson, of Middleborough, made his first purchase of land in the Woodstock area on the 6th of March, 1783. He was a good man, a deacon of the Baptist Church and also the church clerk for many years. Originally the farm he purchased had belonged to James Washburn the father of Levi Washburn, and the date of the sale was 1777. Like many early settlers in not only Woodstock but other areas as well, the Washburns came to Vermont via towns in central and western Massachusetts . . . in this case the town of Brookfield.

We also find in Woodstock Caleb and Eleazer Wood. Eleazer is said to have been 'a teller of tales about old Middleborough' and he followed the trade of a blacksmith.

William Raymond, the son of Barnabus Raymond, was also from Middleborough. He was a shoemaker in his native town [Middleborough] and brought his family to Woodstock in 1780. In 1782 he and his wife Phebe joined the Congregational Church. Ichabod Churchill born in Plymouth on 20 August 1746 became a resident of Middleborough and came to Woodstock about 1777. His wife and four children accompanied him. There were Bennetts in Woodstock also. Captain Joseph Bennett was considered a very good carpenter. By his first wife he had thirteen children, the youngest of whom was named Nathan Tinkham Bennett. Of course many of the Woodstock area families did not come directly from Middleborough but it is almost certain many of these people were 'related kin' nevertheless.

A neighboring town to Woodstock is Bridgewater, Vermont and there are many family ties here also . . . both to Woodstock and to Middleborough. Joseph Churchill was noted as an excellent house painter and he, too, was a person from old Middleborough. James Cobb of Middleborough was an original settler at Woodstock in 1777. Nathan Eddy's son Ephraim Eddy of Middleborough came to Woodstock as early as 1779. Later his brother, Isaac, came from Windsor, Vermont and together they operated a clothier's works . . . this was in July 1797. The 1790 census for Woodstock, Vermont contains many of the same surnames as does the Middleborough census and it indicates that there is a very good possibility of 'kinship' in the two areas.

In some families there was a great deal more moving about than in others. In some instances two, three or more generations of a family have occupied successively the same house. This is true of Middleborough as well as of other locations. In other instances all the children will move away . . . sometimes several of them to the same town, sometimes to widely separated towns and even to several different states. There are many Middleborough families who have intermarried only within families of Middleborough for several generations. Sometimes a family has a tendency to marry into the same family or families. Brothers will marry sisters and on occasion a brother will marry his brother's widow or perhaps a sister will marry her brother-in-law. Pomfret, Barnard and Harland are three more Vermont towns that Middleborough persons seemed to have a liking for. In their 'later years' many families will return to the old 'home town' . . . the place where their particular branch of the family started.

If you are endeavoring to do some family research you will find most helpful if you know or can learn the location where the births, marriages and deaths occur. Without the name of a town and a state . . . your task can be quite difficult.

One thing is certain . . . they put on their 'walking shoes' and the local cobblers or cordwainers as they were called . . . made them sturdy shoes to tramp as many miles as they did.

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## TURTLE EGGS FOR AGASSIZ

by Dallas Lore Sharp

From "Atlantic Classics" published by
Atlantic Monthly Press, Inc., 1918

*Many readers may have read this account of getting turtle eggs for Agassiz, but since some time probably has elapsed since the reading of it, you will undoubtedly again enjoy the hilarious episode of the dignified Professor John Whipple Potter Jenks pursuing a turtle on his hands and knees with a tin pail full of sand clenched in his teeth, and his mad dash to get the eggs to Professor Agassiz in Cambridge within a specified time.*

*Professor Jenks was widely known and held in high esteem as a naturalist and college professor. As a young man he was a student at the historic Peirce Academy in Middleboro. After graduating from Brown University and entering the teaching profession for a few years, he returned to Middleboro to be principal of the Peirce Academy he had attended in his youth. Beginning with eleven pupils, he built up the enrollment until just before the Civil War attendance numbered over four hundred, pupils coming from all over the country. He began the study of taxidermy and collected and mounted a collection of specimens that became the most famous in any under-graduate school.*

*Professor Jenks remained at Peirce Academy for thirty years and then accepted a call to become professor of Agricultural Zoology at Brown University. Brown's Museum of Zoology was named the "Jenks Museum." At Brown he built up another collection of over fifty thousand specimens. Through his work as a naturalist he became a friend of Professor Louis Agassiz of Harvard University and on his field trips always carried a letter of introduction from Professor Agassiz.*

*In 1968, a movement was begun to have a commemorative stamp issued honoring Professor Jenks. Many famed naturalists and public figures sponsored the move, but the effort was unsuccessful, although all agreed that Professor Jenks was well worthy of the honor.*

*For the sake of brevity, a few paragraphs of the introduction to the article have been omitted.*

It would seem, naturally, that there could be nothing unusual or interesting about the getting of turtle eggs when you want them. Nothing at all, if you should chance to want the eggs as you chance to find them. So — with anything else, — good copper stock, for instance, if you should chance to want it, and should chance to be along when they chance to be giving it away. But if you want copper stock, say of C & H quality, WHEN you want it, and are bound to have it, then you must command more than a college professor's salary. And likewise, precisely, when it is turtle eggs that you are bound to have.

PEIRCE ACADEMY

Founded in 1808 by Major Levi Peirce for whom the Academy was named. The historic building, facing a broad lawn and Thatcher's Row, was torn down in 1932 to make way for a new U. S. Post Office.

Agassiz wanted those turtle eggs when he wanted them — not a minute over three hours from the minute they were laid. Yet even that does not seem exacting, hardly more difficult than the getting of hen eggs only three hours old. Just so, provided the professor could have his private turtle-coop in Harvard Yard, and provided he could have made his turtles lay. But turtles will not respond like hens, to meat-scraps and the warm mash. The professor's problem was not to get from a mud turtle's nest in the back yard to the table in the laboratory, but to get from the laboratory in Cambridge to some pond when the turtles were laying, and back to the laboratory within the limited time. And this, in the days of Darius Green, might have called for nice and discriminating work — as it did.

Agassiz had been engaged for a long time upon his "Contributions." He had brought the great work nearly to a finish. It was indeed, finished but for one small yet very important bit of obsrevation: he had carried the turtle egg through every stage of development with the single exception of one — the very earliest — that stage of first cleavages, when the cell begins to segment, immediately upon its being laid. That beginning stage had brought the "Contributions" to a halt. To get eggs that were fresh enough to show the incubation at this period had been impossible.

There were several ways that Agassiz might have proceeded: he might have got a leave of absence for the spring term, taken his laboratory to some pond inhabited by turtles, and there camped until he should catch the reptile digging out her nest. But there were difficulties in all of that — as those who are college professors and naturalists know. As this was quite out of the question, he did the easiest thing — asked Mr. Jenks of Middleboro to get him the eggs. Mr. Jenks got them. Agassiz knew all about his getting them; and I say the strange and irritating thing is, that Agassiz did not think it worth while to tell us about it at least in the preface of his monumental work.

It was many years later that Mr. Jenks, then a gray haired college professor, told me how he got those eggs to Agassiz:

"I was principal of an academy, during my younger years" he began, "and was busy one day with my classes when a large man suddenly filled the doorway of the room, smiled to the four corners of the room, and called out with a big, quick voice that he was Professor Agassiz.

Of course he was. I knew it, even before he had time to shout it to me across the room.

Would I get him some turtle eggs?" he called. Yes, I would. And would I get them to Cambridge within three hours from the time they were laid? Yes, I would. And I did. And it was worth the doing. But I did it only once.

When I promised Agassiz those eggs I knew where I was going to get them. I had got turtle eggs there before — at a particular patch of sandy shore along a pond, a few miles distant from the academy.

Three hours was the limit. From the railroad station to Boston is thirty-five miles, from the pond to the station was perhaps three or four miles; from Boston to Cambridge we called about three miles. Forty miles in round numbers! We figured it all out before he returned, and got the trip down to two hours — record time — driving from the pond to the station; from the station by express train to Boston; from Boston by cab to Cambridge. This left an easy hour for accidents and delays.

Cab and car and carriage we reckoned into our time-table; but what we didn't figure on was the turtle."

He paused abruptly.

"Young man," he went on, his shaggy brows and spectacles hardly hiding the twinkle in the eyes that were bent severely upon me, "young man, when you go after turtle eggs, take into account the turtle. No! No! That is bad advice. Youth never reckons on the turtle — and youth seldom ought to. Only old age does that; and old age would never have got those turtle eggs to Agassiz.

It was in the early spring that Agassiz came to the academy, long before there was any likelihood of the turtles laying. But I was eager for the quest, and so fearful of failure that I started out to watch at the pond fully two weeks ahead of the time that the turtles might be expected to lay. I remember the date clearly: it was May 14.

A little before dawn — along near three o'clock — I would drive over to the pond, hitch my horse nearby, settle myself quietly among some thick cedars close to the sandy shore, and there I would wait, my kettle of sand ready, my eye covering the whole sleeping pond. Here among the cedars I would eat my breakfast, and then get back in good season to open the academy for the morning session.

And so the watch began.

I soon came to know individually the dozen or more turtles that kept to my side of the pond. Shortly after the cold mist would lift and melt away, they would stick their heads through the quiet water; and as the sun slanted down over [illegible] ragged rim of tree-tops, the slow things would float into the warm lighted spots, or crawl out and doze comfortably on the hummocks and snags.

What fragrant mornings those were! How fresh and new and unbreathed! The pond odors, the woods odors, the odors of ploughed fields — of water-lily, and wild grape, and the dew-laid soil! I can taste them yet, and hear them yet — the still, large sounds of the waking day — the pickerel breaking the quiet with his swirl; the kingfisher dropping anchor; the stir of feet and wings among the trees. And then the thought of the great book being held up for me! Those were the mornings!

But there began to be a good many of them, for the turtles showed no desire to lay. They sprawled in the sun, and never one came out upon the sand as if she intended to help on the great professor's book. The embryology of her eggs was of small concern to her; her contribution to the Natural History of the United States could wait.

And it did wait. I began my watch on the 14th of May; June first found me still among the cedars, still waiting, as I had waited every morning, Sundays and rainy days alike. Ju[illegible] first was a perfect morning, but every turtle slid out upon her log, as if egg-laying might be a matter strictly of next year.

I began to grow uneasy — not impatient yet, for a naturalist learns his lesson of patience early, and for all his years; but I began to fear lest, by some subtile sense, my presence might somehow be known to the creatures; that they might have gone some other place to lay, while I was away at the schoolroom.

I watched on to the end of the first week, onto the end of the second week in June, seeing the mists rise and vanish every morning, and along with them vanish, more and more, the poetry of my early morning vigil. Poetry and rheumatism cannot long dwell together in the same clump of cedars, and I had begun to feel the rheumatism. A month of morning mists wrapping me around had at last soaked through to my bones. But Agassiz was waiting, and the world was waiting, for those turtle eggs; and I would wait. It was all I could do, for there is no use bringing a china nest-egg to a turtle; she is not open to any such delicate suggestion.

Then came the day; I knew it. I have heard persons say that they can hear the grass grow; that they know by som[illegible] extra sense when danger is nigh. That we have these extr[illegible] senses I fully believe, and I believe they can be sharpened by cultivation. For a month I had been watching, brooding over this pond, and now I know. I felt a stirring of the pulse of things that the cold-hearted turtles could no more escape than could the clods and I.

Leaving my horse unhitched, as if he, too, understood, I slipped eagerly into my covert for a look at the pond. As I did so a large pickerel ploughed a furrow out through the spatdocks, and in his wake rose the head of an enormous turtle. Swinging slowly around, the creature headed straight for the shore, and without a pause, scrambled out on the sand.

She was about the size of a big scoop-shovel; but that was not what excited me, so much as her manner, and the gait at which she moved; for there was method in it and fixed purpose. On she came, shuffling over the sand toward the higher open fields, with a hurried, determined see-saw that was taking her somewhere in particular, and that was bound to get her there on time.

I held my breath. Had she been a dinosaurian making Mesozoic footprints, I could not have been more fearful. For footprints in the Mesozoic mud, or in the sands of time, were as nothing to me when compared with fresh turtle eggs in the sands of this pond.

But over the strip of sand, without a stop, she paddled, and up a narrow cow-path into the high grass along a fence. Then up the narrow cow-path, on all fours, just like another turtle, I paddled, and into the high, wet grass along the fence.

I kept well within sound of her, for she moved recklessly, leaving a trail of flattened grass a foot and half wide. I wanted to stand up — and I don't believe I could have turned her back with a rail — but I was afraid if she saw me that she might return indefinitely to the pond; so on I went, flat to the ground, squeezing through the lower rails of the fence, as if the field beyond were a melon patch. It was nothing of the kind, only a wild, uncomfortable pasture, full of dewberry vines, and very discouraging. They were excessively wet vines and briery. I pulled my coat sleeves as far over my fists as I could get them, and with the tin pail of sand swinging from between my teeth to avoid noise, I stumped fiercely, but silently, on after the turtle.

She was laying her course, I thought, straight down the length of this dreadful pasture, when, not far from the fence, she suddenly hove to, warped herself short about, and came back, barely clearing me, at a clip that was thrilling. I warped about, too, and in her wake bore down across the corner of the pasture, across the powdery public road, and on to a fence along a field of young corn.

I was somewhat wet by this time, but not so wet as I had been before wallowing through the deep, dry dust of the road. Hurrying up behind a large tree by the fence, I peered down the corn rows and saw the turtle stop, and begin to paw about in the loose, soft soil. She was going to lay!

I held on to the tree and watched, as she tried this place, and that place, and the other place — the eternally feminine. But THE place, evidently, was hard to find. What could a female turtle do with a whole field of possible nests to choose from? Then at last she found it, and whirling about, she backed quickly at it, and tail first, began to bury herself before my staring eyes.

Those were not the supreme moments of my life; perhaps those moments came later in that day; but those certainly were among the slowest, most dreadfully mixed of moments that I ever experienced. They were hours long. There she was, her shell just showing, like some old hulk in the sand along shore. And how long would she stay there? And how should I know if she had laid an egg.

I could still wait. And so I waited, then, over freshly awakened fields, floated four mellow strokes from the distant town clock.

Four o'clock! Why, there was not a train until seven! No train for three hours! The eggs would spoil! Then with a rush it come over me that this was Sunday morning, and there was no regular seven o'clock train, — none until after nine.

I think I should have fainted had not the turtle just then begun crawling off. I was weak and dizzy; but there, there in the sand were the eggs! and Agassiz! and the great book. And I cleared the fence, and the forty miles that lay between me and Cambridge, at a single jump. He should have them, trains or no. Those eggs should go to Agassiz by seven o'clock, if I had to gallop every mile of the way. Forty miles! Any horse could cover it in three hours, if he had to; and upsetting the astonished turtle, I scooped out her round white eggs.

On a bed of sand in the bottom of the pail I laid them with what care my trembling fingers allowed; filled in between them with more sand; so with another layer to the rim; and covering all smoothly with more sand, I ran back for my horse.

That horse knew, as well as I, that the turtle had laid, and that he was to get those eggs to Agassiz. He turned out of that field into the road on two wheels, a thing he had not done for twenty-years, doubling me up before the dashboard, the pail of eggs miraculously lodged between my knees.

I let him out. If only he could keep this pace all the way to Cambridge! or even half way there; and I would have time to finish the trip on foot. I shouted him on, holding to the dasher with one hand, the pail of eggs with the other, not daring to get off my knees, though the bang on them as we pounded down the wood road, was terrific. But nothing must happen to the eggs; they must not be jarred, or even turned over in the sand before they came to Agassiz.

In order to get out on the pike it was necessary to drive back away from Boston toward the town. We had nearly covered the distance, and were rounding a turn from the woods into the open fields, when, ahead of me, at the station it seemed, I heard the quick sharp whistle of a locomotive.

What did it mean? Then followed the puff, puff, puff of a starting train. But what train? Which way going? And jumping to my feet for a longer view, I pulled into a side road that paralleled the track, and headed hard for the station.

We rocked along. The station was still out of sight, but from behind the bushes that shut it from view, rose the smoke of a moving engine. It was perhaps a mile away, but we were approaching, head on, and topping a little hill I swept down upon a freight train, the black smoke pouring from the stack, as the mighty creature pulled itself together for its swift run down the rails.

My horse was on the gallop, going with the track, and straight toward the coming train. The sight of it almost maddened me — the bare thought of it, on the road to Boston! On I went; on it came, a half mile, a quarter mile between us, when suddenly my road shot out along an unfenced field with only a level stretch of sod between me and the enigne.

With a pull that lifted the horse from his feet, I swung him into the field and sent him straight as an arrow for the track. That train should carry me and my eggs to Boston!

The engineer pulled the rope. He saw me standing up in the rig, saw my hat blow off, saw me wave my arms, saw the tin pail swinging in my teeth, and he jerked out a succession of sharp halts! But it was he should halt, not I; and on we went, the horse with a flounder landing the carriage on top of the track.

The train was already grinding to a stop, but before it was near a standstill, I had backed off the track, jumped out, and running down the rails with the astonished engineers gaping at me, had swung aboard the cab.

They offered no resistance; they hadn't time. Nor did they have the disposition, for I looked strange, not to say dangerous. Hatless, dew-soaked, smeared with yellow mud, and holding, as if it were a baby or a bomb, a little tin pail of sand.

"Crazy," the fireman muttered, looking to the engineer for his clue.

I had been crazy, perhaps, but I was not crazy now.

"Throw her wide open," I commanded. "Wide open! These are fresh turtle eggs for Professor Agassiz of Cambridge. He must have them before breakfast."

Then they knew I was crazy, and evidently thinking it best to humor me, threw the throttle wide open, and away we went.

I kissed my hand to the horse, grazing unconcernedly in the open field, and gave a smile to my crew. That was all I could give them, and hold myself and the eggs together. But the smile was enough. And they smiled through their smut at me, though one of them held fast to his shovel, while the other kept his hand upon a big ugly wrench. Neither of them spoke to me, but above the roar of the swaying engine I caught enough of their broken talk to understand that they were driving under full steam, with the intention of handing [illegible] over to the Boston police as perhaps the easiest way of disposing of me.

I was only afraid that they would try it at the next station. But that station whizzed past without a bit of slack, and the next, and the next; when it came over me that this was the through freight, which should have passed in the night and was making up time.

Only the fear of the shovel and the wrench kept me from shaking hands with both men at this discovery. But I beamed at them; and they at me. I was enjoying it. The unwanted jar beneath my feet was wrinkling my diaphragm with spasms of delight. And the fireman beamed at the engineer with a look that said, "See the lunatic grin; he likes it."

He did like it. How the iron wheels sang to me as they took the rails! How the rushing wind in my ears sang to me! From my stand on the fireman's side of the cab I could catch a glimpse of the track just ahead of the engine, where the ties seemed to leap into the throat of the mile-devouring monster. The joy of it! of seeing space swallowed by the mile!

I shifted the eggs from hand to hand and thought of my horse, of Agassiz, of the great book, of my great luck, — luck, — luck, — until the multitudinous tongues of the thundering trains were all chiming "luck! luck! luck!" They knew! they understood! This beast of fire and tireless wheels was doing its very best to get the eggs to Agassiz!

We swung out past the Blue Hills, and yonder flashed the morning sun from the towering dome of the State House. I might have leaped from the cab and run the rest of the way on foot, had I not caught the eye of the engineer watching me narrowly. I was not in Boston yet, nor in Cambridge, either. I was an escaped lunatic, who had held up a train and forced it to carry me to Boston.

Perhaps I had overdone the lunacy business. Suppose these two men should take it into their heads to turn me over to the police whether I would or no? I could never explain the case in time to get the eggs to Agassiz. I looked at my watch. There was still a few minutes left in which I might explain to these men who, all at once had become my captors. But it was too late. Nothing could avail against my actions, my appearance, my little pail of sand.

I had not thought of my appearance before. Here I was, face and clothes caked with yellow mud, my hair wild and matted, my hat gone, and in my full grown hands a tiny tin pail of sand, as if I had been digging all night with a tiny, tin shovel on the shore! And thus to appear in the decent streets of Boston on a Sunday morning!

I began to feel like a hunted criminal. The situation was serious, or might be, and rather desperately funny at best. I must in some way have shown my new fears, for both men watched me more closely.

Suddenly, as we were nearing the outer freight yard, the train slowed down and came to a stop. I was ready to jump, but had no chance. They had nothing to do, apparently, but to guard me. I looked at my watch again. What time we had made! It was only six o'clock, with a whole hour to get to Cambridge.

But I didn't like this delay. Five minutes — ten — went by.

"Gentlemen," I began, but was cut short by an express train coming past. We were moving again — on to the main track; and on with a bump and a crash and a succession of crashes, running the length of the train; on at a turtle's pace, but on — when the fireman, quickly jumping for the bell-rope, left the way to the step free, and — the chance had come!

I never touched the step, but landed in the soft sand at the side of the track, and made a line for the yard fence.

There was no hue or cry. I glanced over my shoulder to see if they were after me. Evidently their hands were full, and they didn't know I had gone.

But I had gone; and was ready to drop over the high board fence, when it occurred to me that I might drop into a policeman's arms. Hanging my pail in a splint on top of a post, I peered cautiously over — a very wise thing to do before you jump a high board fence. There, crossing the open square toward the station, was a big, burly fellow with a club — looking for me.

I flattened for a moment, when some one in the yard yelled at me. I preferred the policeman, and grabbing my pail I slid over to the street. The policeman moved on past the corner of the station out of sight. The square was free, and yonder stood a cab!

Time was flying now. Here was the last lap. The cabman saw me coming, and squared away. I waved a paper dollar at him, but he only stared the more. A dollar can cover a good deal, but I was too much for one dollar. I pulled out another, thrust them both at him and dodged into the cab, calling, "Cambridge."

He would have taken me straight to the police station, had I not said, "Harvard College. Professor Agassiz's home! I've got eggs for Agassiz;" and pushed another dollar up at him through the hole.

It was nearly half-past six.

"Let him go!" I ordered. "Here's another dollar if you make Agassiz's house in twenty minutes. Let him out; never mind the police."

He evidently knew the police, or there were none around at that time on Sunday morning. We went down the sleeping streets, as I had gone down the wood roads from the pond two hours before, but with the rattle and crash now of a fire brigade. Whirling a corner into Cambridge Street, we took the bridge at a gallop, the driver shouting out something in Hibernian to a pair of waving arms and a belt and brass buttons.

Across the bridge with a rattle and jolt that put the eggs in jeopardy, and on over the cobble-stones we sped. Half standing to lessen the jar, I held the pail in one hand and held myself in the other, not daring to let go even to look at my watch.

But I was afraid to look at the watch. I was afraid to see how near to seven o'clock it might be. The sweat was dropping from my nose, so close was I running to the limit of my time.

Suddenly there was a lurch, and I dove forward, ramming my head into the front of the cab, coming up with a rebound that landed me across the small of my back on the seat, and sent half of my pail of eggs helter-skelter over the floor.

We had stopped. Here was Agassiz's house; and without taking time to pick up the scattered eggs, I tumbled out, and pounded on the door.

No one was astir in the house. But I would stir them. And I did. Right in the midst of the racket the door opened. It was the maid.

"Agassiz" I gasped. "I want Professor Agassiz, quick!" And I pushed by her into the hall.

"Go away, sir. I'll call the police. Professor Agassiz is in bed. Go away, sir."

"Call him — Agassiz — instantly, or I'll call him myself."

But I didn't; for just then a door overhead was flung open, a great, white-robed figure appeared on the dim landing above, and a quick, loud voice called excitedly, "Let him in! Let him in! I know him. He has my turtle eggs!"

And the apparition, slipperless, and clad in anything but an academic gown, came sailing down the stairs.

The maid fled. The great man, his arms extended, laid hold of me with both hands, and dragging me and my precious pail into his study, with a swift, clean stroke laid open one of the eggs, as the watch in my trembling hands ticked its way to seven — as if nothing unusual were happening to the history of the world.

"You were in time then?" I asked.

"To the tick. There stands my copy of the great book. I am proud of the humble part I had in it."

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# General Tom Thumb and his Lady

by
Mertie E. Romaine

# *General Tom Thumb and his Lady*

**by**
**Mertie E. Romaine**

"GENERAL TOM THUMB AND HIS LADY" started out to be a pamphlet that could be sold to benefit the Middleborough Historical Museum and meet the requests of visitors who invariably ask, "Haven"t you anything we can buy that will tell us more about the Tom Thumb's?". There is nothing. Very little has been written about this fascinating couple despite the fame and acclaim they won around the world.

The author, when in her twenties, began collecting memorabilia and information about General Tom Thumb and his wife Lavinia, as well as Lavinia's little sister Minnie and Commodore Nutt, the midget who completed the quartet. When she began to gather together this material, collected over a span of many years, there proved to be much too much for a pamphlet and the project grew into a book.

The volume contains about fifty illustrations and covers the lives of the "Little Folk" from the time Lavinia was born in the small New England town of Middleborough, Massachusetts, was engaged by P. T. Barnum to appear at his American Museum in New York City where she met General Tom Thumb, culminating in the Fairy Wedding.

Tom Thumb's story is told from the time Barnum discovered him in Bridgeport, Connecticut, at the age of four, his years at the American Museum, his travels in Europe where he made appearances before Queen Victoria and many of the crowned heads of Europe, how he saved P. T. Barnum from financial ruin, his marriage to Lavinia and the little home they built in Middleboro with the interior and furnishings scaled to accommodate the diminutive occupants. Included also is the story of Lavinia's younger sister Minnie, Commodore Nutt, and the travels that took the tiny quartet around the world.

And finally the twilight years, when Mrs. Tom Thumb became Countess Magri, the retirement to Lavinia's family home in Middleboro when both became familiar figures in the life of Lavinia's home town.

"GENERAL TOM THUMB AND HIS LADY" will convince the reader that Tom Thumb was more than a fairy tale.

Every copy of the book sold at the Museum or by members of the Middleborough Historical Association will benefit the Museum.

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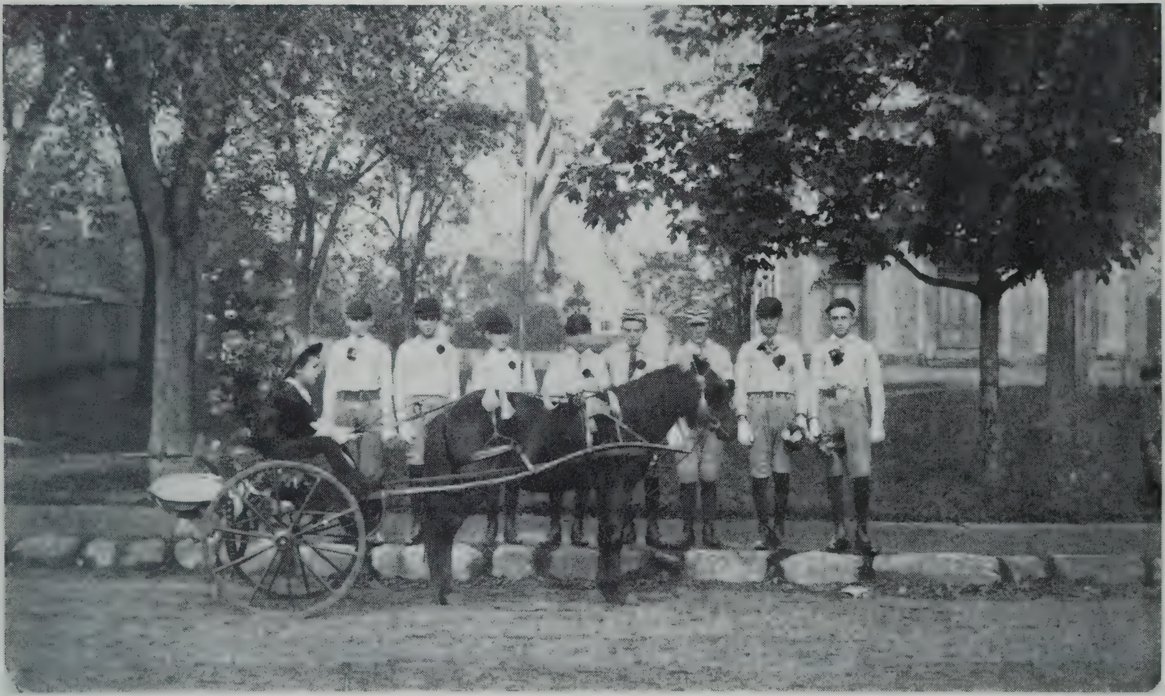

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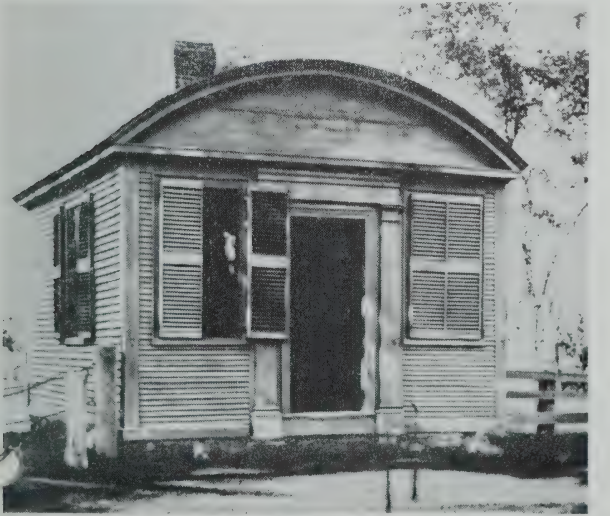
## NEW ENGLAND LAW OFFICES

Mr. Harold G. Travis, ex-president of the Weston Historical Society, wrote about 18th and early 19th century law offices still to be found in New England in an article that appeared in the Weston Historical Society Bulletin. We are indebted to Mr. Travis for the information contained herein. He asked, "How many are left and where?" He discovered an astonishing number of these well-kept and interesting little buildings in various parts of New England.

In this area, an unusually attractive one is to be seen in Sandwich, the Seth Freeman Nye law office, 1830, used by Seth Nye, Trial Justice of Barnstable County and Justice of the Peace. The building is located next to the Sandwich town hall and interestingly, with a wing added, has been made into two comfortable apartments.

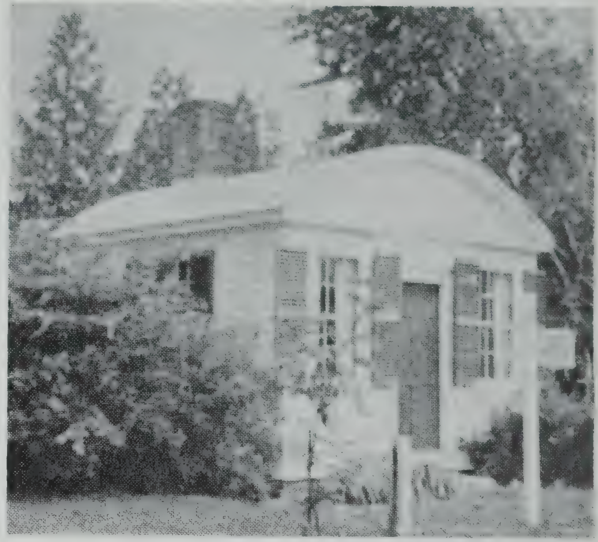
Daniel Webster's 1842 law office in Marshfield was restored and dedicated at a ceremony held on July 4, 1970. Mr. Webster settled in Marshfield in 1832 and built his law office in 1842. Many were the important political figures and statesmen who conferred with him there.

On the grounds of our own Middleborough Historical Museum stands the law office of Judge Wilkes Wood, built in [illegible]94 one year after he graduated from Brown University. Judge Wood was an eminent citizen of Plymouth County, having a sterling reputation in his law practice, a state senator for two years, and a member of the Electoral College that cast its vote for William H. Harrison. In 1966, his law office, which had been located on the family estate on South Main Street, was moved to the grounds of the Middleborough Historical Museum. There are two rooms in the building, the front one used by Judge Wood to receive his clients, and the one in the rear for a study and teaching his students. In the first room is a fireplace flanked by bookshelves filled with law books, and on the wall hangs an oil painting of his wife, Lucy Nichols Cushing Wood. The second room houses the Lawrence B. Romaine Memorial Library.



**JOSHUA EDDY LAW OFFICE**

Eddyville 1810



**JOSHUA EDDY LAW OFFICE**

After restoration 1921

Middleboro's oldest and most famous law office now proudly stands beautifully restored at Storrowton on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition at West Springfield. Mrs. James J. Storrow purchased the law office in 1920 and the following year had it moved to its present location. This was the law office of Zachariah Eddy, born December 6, 1780, great-great-great grandson of the Pilgrim, Samuel Eddy. In 1803, as a wedding gift to his son and bride, Joshua Eddy built a beautiful home in the East Middleboro section of the town. In 1810, Zachariah built close to the house a small round-roofed law office. Here he practiced law for forty-one years. The land on which the house and law office was built has remained in posession of the Eddy family since it was purchased from the Indians. The house has been restored by the Eddy Homestead Association and is now a museum known as the "Eddy Homestead." The little law office is visited and admired by thousands who come annually to visit Storrowton.

* * *

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
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Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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## SLAVERY IN MIDDLEBORO

Since the book, "ROOTS" by Alex Haley has become a best seller and the television version is said to have attracted the largest audience of any TV program of all times, groups and individuals have held lively discussions as to the impact on race relations. "Roots" is an autobiographical story of the author's search for his ancestors from their African ancestry, and depicts the mistreatment of the author's ancestors at the hands of white slaveowners.

Mr. Haley said in an interview, "We have long in this country committed the error of trying to hide or obscure slavery like it never happened." It did happen and right here in Middleboro. However, the stories that have come down to us about the slaves owned by some of the early families here indicate they were not mistreated, but rather were made part of the family, becoming loyal and trusted servants, many remaining with their masters after given their freedom.

The first slave to come to Middleboro is believed to have been brought by John Alden, grandson of the Pilgrim John Alden, who lived in Titicut, the northern section of the town. Thomas Weston in his History of Middleboro tells some amusing anecdotes about slaves kept by some of the early Middleboro families.

The Reverend Peter Thatcher owned a slave named Sambo. One day Sambo was asked to bring in some wood and Mrs. Thatcher proceeded to build a fire in the fireplace. Sambo disappeared. After some searching he was found hiding in the woods cold and hungry. In his broken English he told his rescuers that in his country they also had slaves, and when there was hunger the slaves were roasted and eaten. When he saw the roaring flames, he said to himself, "Sambo, you days all ober wid you now. Dem white folks roast you in the oben and eat you." So he fled.

On another occasion, he brought a loaf of bread to his mistress and said, "Look Missy, de crus' lef' bread and gone up trough the oben." She told him his oven was not hot enough and the bread fell. "How could bread fall? Was it not on de bottom of the oven?" Soon after, Mrs. Thatcher came into the kitchen and saw Sambo surrounded by loaves of bread on the floor and Sambo running from one to the other, sitting on each one. "Look Missy, is not dis a charming way to keep de crus' from risin' from the bread?" he said.

When the great evangelist Whitefield came to preach in Plymouth, Sambo walked to Plymouth to hear him. For some reason Whitefield himself did not come but sent a substitute. During the service, Sambo became very demonstrative and caused quite a disturbance. A deacon went to him and asked him to be quiet. Sambo answered, "I cannot be still; Massa Whitefield preach so he nearly broke my heart." "But," said the deacon, "it is not Mr. Whitefield preaching." "Not Massa Whitefield?" wailed Sambo, "then I hab made all dis bullabadoo for nothing!"

Cyrus Wood, who resided at the Four Corners, owned a slave by the name of Elsie, who acquired a taste for strong drink. She was summoned before the elders of the church. She made a long and involved confession about meeting the devil after she bought the bottle of whiskey. She took a little taste, thinking it might do her rheumatics some good. The devil kept saying, "Elsie, tase a little bit more." Elsie "tase and tase him and kept tasing him until I tase him all up. Now brethren and sisters, if I hab done you any harm I am much obliged to you." Elsie afterward was forgiven and allowed back into the church and said when tempted, "Get you behind me debil. You make one big fool of me once, I will neber tase de whiskey again, if de debils be as thick as de huckleberries in Massa's pasture." After Elsie had been given her freedom, a little cottage was built for her in the pasture land in the rear of the Morton house, where she lived out her days.

Madame Morton had two slaves, Shurpa and Aaron, both very devout and both lived to be very old, remaining with the Morton family until after their death. Judge Oliver had a slave by the name of Quassia. After the Judge left America, Quassia lived with a family in Plymouth. Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts, whose daughter married the son of Judge Oliver, had a slave named Phyllis. Stephen Powers, whose house stands in the Eddyville section of Middleboro, had a slave named Cato Boston whom he purchased in Middleboro for twenty pounds.

It is thought there were about twelve slaves in Middleboro, but there were probably more of whom no record was kept. Some owners made a note in their will that the slaves should be freed. After the Revolutionary War, through the kindness and moral sense of the people, slavery practically disappeared from Middleboro.

## NOTICE

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Middleborough Historical Association it was voted to publish three issues of the Middleborough Antiquarian annually instead of four as has been the custom. Single issues will now cost $1.00.

The change is due to the large increase in the cost of producing the Antiquarian. The price of paper has skyrocketed and the cost of printing has also increased greatly.

It was decided to take these steps rather than increase the price of the annual subscription or to increase the charge to the advertisers. The Antiquarian is, of course, free to members, one of the advantages of becoming a member of the Middleborough Historical Association.

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

of

Olde Middleborough

in

Plymouth County

Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

The War of 1812-1814 was not a popular war anywhere in the United States and this meant that there was no rush to enlist. Officially called the War with Great Britain, war was declared on 18 June, 1812 and peace ratified on 17 February 1815. President was James Madison and he offered the following reasons in his war declaration statement . . . 'impressment of American seaman by British cruisers, the aggressions upon commerce by the British system of blockade, and the encouragement by Great Britain to the hostile Indians.'

This was a naval war and although all states participated much of the actual fighting was off the eastern seacoast. Probably the best known battles were those fought on Lake Champlain and Lake Erie.

There were several militia companies raised in Middleborough and most of them saw service at Plymouth or New Bedford. Capt. Nathaniel Eddy's Company, Lieut. Col. C. Howard's Regiment served from Sept. 21 to Oct. 12, 1814. The company was raised at Middleborough and saw service at Plymouth. The names of the enlisted men have a very familiar ring of 'old Middleborough families' . . . and we find Eddy, Wood, Tinkham, Bumpus, Cushman, Richmond, Shaw and many others.

Captain Joseph LeBaron and Capt. Peter H. Pierce also commanded companies in Lieut. Col. C. Howard's Regiment. Again the names are familiar. Capt. Nathaniel Wilder raised a company at Middleborough under Gen. Goodwin's command which saw service at New Bedford.

It is interesting to note that Thomas Weston stated that Captain Greenleaf Pratt commanded a company but 'its officers and members were not known.'

However state records indicate the company was raised at Middleborough from Sept. 21 to Oct. 15, 1814 and saw service at Plymouth. Capt. Pratt's officers were . . . Ebenezer Vaughan, Ensign, Sergeants Martin White, Benjamin Washburn, Malitiah H. Pearce and Anson Pearce. Corporals were Henry Perkins, Nathaniel Andrews, Elias Parris and John Clark. Many of these names are family names relatively common in Middleboro History.

Those enrolled as privates were the following:

Alden, Daniel
Alden, Elijah, Jr.
Alden, Seth
Ashley, Luther
Baker, James
Bayley, Winslow C.
Braley, Silas
Burgess, Stephen
Canady, Zebulon
Caswell, Nathaniel
Clark, Henry
Clark, Richard
Cole, Alden
Cole, Samuel
Coombs, Simeon
Drake, David
Drake, Enoch
Drake, Enos
Drake, William
Eaton, Alfred
Eaton, Barzilla
Eaton, Seth
Eaton, Solomon
Freeman, Stephen
Fuller, Elisha
Gifford, Jonah
Goodwin, Charles
Hammond, Elisha
Hatheway, Silas
Hawland, William
Hinds, Leonard
Hoar, Job Jr.
Hoar, Stephen
Hoar, William
Keith, Aberdeen
Keith, Jeremiah
Lewis, Elijah
McAuly, Obed
Miller, Samuel
Nelson, John
Peirce, Isaac
Perkins, Zalli
Pickins, Silas
Pickins, Zacheus
Pierce, Eaton
Pierce, Joseph
Ramsden, Job
Reed, Elijah
Reed, Lake
Robbins, Lemueal
Robinson, Alvin
Rod, Solomon
Samson, John
Samson, Thomas
Shackley, Joseph
Shaw, Eben
Shaw, Ebenezer
Shaw, Eli
Shaw, Joel
Shaw, Joshua
Shaw, Sullivan
Shaw, Zephaniah
Skiff, Abraham
Standish, John C.
Strobridge, Ebenezer
Townsend, Avery
Washburn, Nathan
Washburn, Thomas
Westgate, Daniel
Westgate, Horace
Westgate, Obed
Westgate, William
Weston, Abner
White, Solomon

Greenleaf Pratt was son of William Pratt and his wife Mary King of Raynham. He was born 13 May, 1783, the fifth child. William Pratt lived in Titicut Parish perhaps better known as North Middleboro, where he purchased a farm of a man named Boyce who had purchased from the Indian Sachem, Chicatanbut. Greenleaf Pratt married Lucy Edson of Bridgewater, Massachusetts. It is said that he was a 'man of uncommon strength, of great decision of character, of stirring enterprise and activity, devoted chiefly to the culture of his farm, large-hearted, of generous hospitality, public-spirited and an acknowledged leader among men.'

After his father's death he lived on the homestead. A member of the North Congregational Church and is buried in Titicut Parish Cemetery.

Greenleaf Pratt had several children, including two sons, but they moved away from the Middleborough area.

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## MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION PROGRAMS FOR 1976-1977

November 1, 1976

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Mr. and Mrs. George Breck of Plymouth. Mr. Breck is president of the Eddy Family Association of America, and the program will include the part played in the Revolutionary War by Captain Joshua Breck of Middleborough. A slide-tape presentation.

February 7, 1977

WEEDS AND HISTORY

William Perkins of Halifax, Mass. A slide and lecture presentation of local weeds and vegetation used currently and in the history of our country.

April 4, 1977

HISTORY OF HISTORY

Past presidents of the Association. Past presidents will present a program giving highlights and experiences of their terms of office.

June 6, 1977

ATLANTIC ADVENTURES AND TALL SHIPS

Edgar Rowe Snow

This is the annual meeting and will be a dinner meeting at the Riverside Restaurant in Middleboro.

## REPORT OF MEETING NOVEMBER 1, 1976

"Highlights of the Revolution," a slide-tape presentation including the part played by Captain Joshua Eddy of Middleborough, was presented at the first meeting of the association, held on November 1, 1976, at the Burkland School Musicorium.

Due to the unavoidable absence of the speakers, Mr. and Mrs. George Breck, the program was presented by Miss Ruth Gates, Membership Secretary, who operated the slide projector and tape recording of Mr. Breck's voice telling the story of the American Revolution and the part played by the Eddy family in this war. Many interesting pictures were seen including scenes in Lexington and Concord. Also a short history of Deborah Sampson of Plympton, Massachusetts, was given.

The last section of the slides dealt with the Eddy family entirely, showing the homes that Joshua built for all his sons in the Eddyville section of the town, his activities in the First Congregational Church at the Green, and his gravestone in the cemetery at the Green.

Newly elected president, A. Kingman Pratt, opened the meeting at 8 P.M. A moment of silence was held in memory of three deceased members: Mr. Myron Dunham, Mr. Ernest Judge, and Dr. Irving R. Hardy of Phoenix, Arizona. The membership secretary read a list of new members who had joined the association since June, 1976.

After the meeting, coffee and doughnuts were served by Mrs. Mertie E. Romaine, Mrs. Doris A. Keith and Mrs. Elizabeth S. Alger.

Ruth E. Gates, secretary pro tem

## MEMBERS JOINING SINCE NOVEMBER, 1976

Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon Phinney, Middleboro
Marion Willard
Elizabeth M. Campbell
Mrs. Judith L. Morris
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mizares
Mr. and Mrs. J. Bernard Otterson
Robert A. Johnson
Edward A. Finneran
Mr. and Mrs. Richard E. Bergman
Mr. and Mrs. Frank M. Raymond
Mrs. Margaret Korpinen
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cifelli
Mrs. Margaret Abramson
Doris M. Williams
Thelma F. Oldfield
Paul A. Sybertz, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Francis E. Rooney
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mather
Mr. and Mrs. William Matthews
Lois W. Lang
Mr. and Mrs. William Gedraitis
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kellogg
Mrs. Elizabeth R. Hebb, Leonard, Michigan
Mrs. Lawrence J. Fahey, Tamarac, Florida
Marion H. Leonard, Lakeville, Mass.
Mrs. Alice C. Meeks, Brockton, Mass.

## GIFTS TO THE MUSEUM

From an out-of-town member and a former resident of Middleboro the Museum received a box of interesting clothes and accessories of the 1880-1890 period. There were a beige silk mask, trimmed with fringe, used at masquerade balls; a handsome black velvet and jet bead collar to wear on very dressy occasions; some fetchings hats and bonnets; a little girl's brown silk dress with TWO aprons to match; beautiful dresses for adults, all from Mrs. Albert Dempsey (Flora Joy) of Milwaukee.

A child's muff, made of white goat's hair and lamb's wool with a little purse inserted in the top, worn by Mrs. Albert Soule in 1903 and given by her. A luxurious carriage robe, fur on one side, heavy woolen plaid on the other, at least one hundred years old, from Albert Soule.

Long baby dresses, white dresses for adults of about 1900, from Mrs. Marion Brightman.

A large quantity of artifacts including antique tools of all kinds and many other items from George F. Braley of New Bedford. Among the donation were several medals, notably two with whaling scenes and one Lindbergh medal. G.A.R. medals have been received from Mrs. Stanley Flagg of York Beach, Maine, and Mrs. Hazel Blanchard of Middleboro; also Woman's Relief Corps medals from Mrs. Lewis Kinsman, Middleboro.

(continued)

Two beautiful dresses once worn by Mrs. Lucy S. Turner of Middleboro, one a wedding dress, the other a handsome black silk gown. Both were made by "Madame" Downey, Middleboro's celebrated modiste of seventy-five years ago. The dresses are exquisite examples of the dressmaking art as it used to be — flutings and ruffles and embroideries not seen today. The dresses were received by the Museum through the courtesy of Mrs. Leonard A. Baker.

A diary kept by Lieut. Nelson Finney of Middleboro in the year 1758. The diary was presented to the Museum by Mrs. Mildred Reed Lindquist of Intervale, New Hampshire, who is the great great granddaughter of Lieut. Tinkham, and whose grandfather was Willard Osborne of North Lakeville.

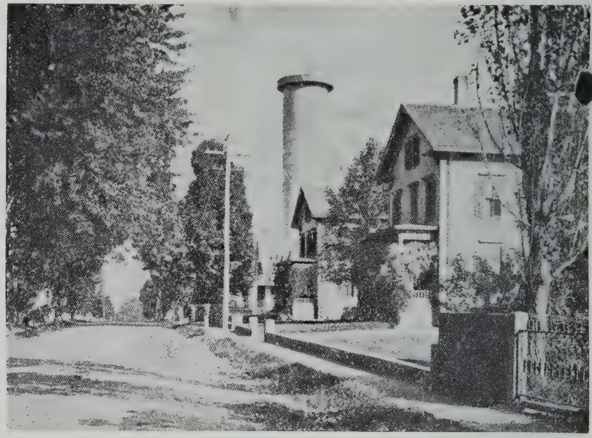
From Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Bump of Florida a collection of photographs of the Tom Thumbs; also two tape recordings made at a meeting of the Middleborough Historical Association on November 5, 1951, when Miss Sarah Adams, a midget from Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts, presented the program of the evening, holding her audience spellbound as, at the age of ninety-one, she reminisced in a clear, firm voice and recited the poem "Hiawatha" entirely from memory.

A bronze plaque depicting the Biblical story of Elijah and the raven. The plaque is made of iron that was mined in Carver, and wrought into a plaque at one of the earliest iron foundries in the country at Pope's Point, Carver, Massachusetts, the forerunner of the Murdock Parlor Grate Company of Middleboro. A family possession of Mrs. Grace I. Tweedy, she recalls that the plaque hung over the fireplace in her grandparents home in South Carver. Her father was born in 1835 and as a little boy on Sunday evenings sat at his mother's knee by the fireplace eating potatoes baked on the hearth, while his mother told him the story of Elijah and the raven. The plaque came to the Museum through the courtesy of Dr. and Mrs. James M. Bonnar.

Two family Bibles from Joseph F. Riley. Records of the Thomastown Circle, a group of women of the Thomastown section of Middleboro active for many years, but now disbanded. A stand lamp made of wood from the old Fall Brook Driving Park, 1890-1909, from Arthur Boardman.

The Middleboro Clothing Company presented the Museum with a large case with glass doors that will be used for display purposes, and some male mannikens of about the turn of the century. A large box of clothing of about the same period contained a very handsome black serge swallow-tail coat, inside of which was sewn a label stating, "This suit is designed and made by first class tailors and is the best suit for $15.00 in the United States."

Maps always create a great deal of interest and the Museum has been the fortunate recipient of two unusual ones, a map of 1831 of the town of Middleboro, given by Thomas Elliott of Fairfield, Florida, who, with his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Elliott, were former residents of Middleboro. The other map is a large reproduction of the original map of the Sixteen Shilling Purchase, a purchase made from the Indians in 1675, with modern roads superimposed on the map. Prepared and presented by Paul C. Leonard of Lakeville.



The old standpipe on Forest Street. The picture of Middleboro (ca 1850) that appeared on the front cover of the previous issue of the Middleborough Antiquarian was taken from this location.

## THE OLD STANDPIPE

The first standpipe to supply water to Middleboro residents and businesses was located on Forest Street, and w[illegible] built in 1885. It was of metal construction and in 1916 was judged unsafe and inefficient, as evidenced when there occurred two disastrous fires, one in Everett Square and the other when the Jones Block on North Main Street was leveled by fire. In both cases low water pressure was blamed for the catastrophe. The subject was discussed in town meetings and on the street, and in 1916 the old standpipe was taken down, the pieces carefully numbered, sold and shipped to the purchaser in Puerto Rico.

A study had been made of the needs for better water service and on April 26, 1915, ground was broken for a new standpipe on Barden Hill, the first concrete watertower tank in Massachusetts and the largest in the United States.

However, the new tower did not prove altogether satisfactory. Leaks developed because of the method used in pouring the cement. The leaks increased and in 1929 Western Waterproofing Company of Boston was given a contract to waterproof the tower. The watertank served the town until 1947, when the town voted and appropriated money to erect a new elevated water storage tank beside the existing one on Barden Hill.

## ELIZABETH ECHE OF KEITETICUT IN THE PRECINCT OF MIDLEBURY

Elizabeth Eche, an "Indian woman being sick & weak of body but of Perfect mind & Memory" made her will on November 25, 1709, in the eighth year of the reign of Queen Ann. Mr. Edward W. Toole of Bridgewater has sent a copy of the will to be published in the Middleborough Antiquarian. A most interesting document it proves to be.

It is the will of "Elizabeth Eche, who has been called Squawbetty." Squawbetty is known as a section included in the vast Indian Reservation that included parts of Middleboro, Raynham, Taunton and Lakeville. That part called Squawbetty is located in what is now East Taunton, which would not have been too far from Elizabeth's home in Titicut (Keiteticut). According to Thomas Weston's History of Middleboro, Squawbetty was so named because the sachem (King Philip) gave to Betty fifty-eight and one-half acres (called Squawbetty).

Elizabeth was greatly concerned about her daughter Mehitable, who was in service to Elkanah Leonard, one of the most prominent citizens of his time. The name of Elkanah Leonard appears frequently in the early history of Middleboro. His home was in that part of town now North Lakeville, in the Tack Factory Neighborhood. Major Leonard was the second practicing lawyer in Middleboro, a Major in the Revolutionary War, and represented the town in the General Court in Boston.

Elizabeth trusted Major Leonard to "care for her daughter until she is eighteen years old, which will be August 15, 1711 . . . desiring him to keep her well and suitable to one of her degree and at ye expiration of ad Time to let her have handsome apparell for holy Days as well as working Days Cloths."

Regarding her lands, Elizabeth mentions Trout Brook, also referred to as Poquoy Brook. In the introduction to his History of Middleboro, Mr. Weston states, "The line between that portion of Taunton and Middleboro between Baiting Brook and Trout Brook, or Poquoy Brook, was indefinite, the boundary having been the Indian Reservation . . ."

Mehitable is said to have married the minister of the Indian Church, and Mehitable's daughter married Stephen David, one of the three Indians who gave land to the Titicut Parish for a church and cemetery.

### The Will of Elizabeth Eche

Will of Elizabeth Eche, who has been called Squawbetty . . .

In the Name of God Amen the 25 of November 1709 & in ye 8 year of ye Reign of Queen Ann over Great Britain & Elizabeth Eche of Keiteticut in the Precinct of Midlebury in ye Plymouth County within the province of the Massachusetts Bay In New England Indian woman being sick & weak of body but of Perfect mind & Memory Thanks be given to God Therefore Calling to my mind the mortality of my body & knowing that it is appointed for all men once to Dye doe make & ordain this my Last will & Testament That is to say principally & first of all I give & recommend my soul into the hands of God that gave it & my body I recommend unto the Earth to be buried in Decent & Christian maner Hoping that at the genrall Resurection I shall receive the same again by the almity power of God & as touching such worldly Estate where with it hath pleased God to bless me with I give Demise & dispose of ye same in maner & form following (viz)

I give & bequeath unto my Daughter Mehitable Eche my dearly beloved & only Child all my Estate both Lands & moveables (viz) all the Land that I had at sd Keteticut of my brothers in Law, George Hunter & Joseph Hunter, being lands that was my father in law's Thomas Hunter given him by Josiah an Indian sachem & 2 iron kettles & an iron pot & a chain to hang on pots & a Chest & all my Estate whatsover & Charge her that she be kind to her father my husband John Eche & her aunt my sister Mehitable Hunter alias Mehitable Cunnet & Leah Hunter my Cousin & joseph Joshman & Let them have Land to Live on & Improve During their naturall Lives & that she herself Live with Elkanah Leonard of Middlebury & be faithful in his service & obedient to his Law full Comands till she be eighteen years old which will be Aug. 15, 1711 whom I Desire & empower to take Care & have the Command & service of — Desiring him to keep her well & suitable to one of her Degree & at ye Expiration of sd Time to Let her have handsome apparell for holy Days as well as for working Days Cloths & also Desire & impower him said Elkana Leonard to take Care of all the Estate that I give my sd Daughter both Lands & moveables till she Come of age to take care of the same & also do his Indeavor to get the deed Recorded that said Josia gave to sd Thomas Hunter or his son David Hunter containing sd Lands & for the Charge & Trouble that he shall be at in the performance of the same Care & Trust that I do Repose in him I give him and his heirs Liberty To cut wood & fencing & what they shall have occasion for in all sd Lands till my Daughter Comes of age & the use of that part of sd Land that Lyeth on the southerly side of Trout Brook ten years afterwards & Liberty to Cut what they have occasion for as aforsd in it &c & I do hereby utterly Disallow Revoak & Disannull all other former testaments wills legacies & bequests & Executors by me in any way before named willed & bequeathed Ratifying & Confirming in witness whereof I have here unto set my hand & seall the Day & year first above written.

Elizabeth Eche her X mark (seal)

signed sealed published & pronounced & Declared by sd
Elizabeth Eche as her last will & Testament

Know all men by these presents that I the above named John Eche doe hereby approve, allow & give my free consent unto this my wife Elizabeth Eche her Last Will & Testament in the Disposing of My Estate both Lands & Moveables in maner is aboue Exprest & to my Daughters being with Elkanah Leonard according to my wifes will in witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand & seal the day & year abouewriten.

John Eche X his mark (seall)

In ye presence of us subscribers

Henry Andress
William Reed
Edward Richmond

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Know all men by these presents that I the within named Elizabeth Eche Do hereby Ratifie & confirm my within riten will & likewise Constitute, and ordain my within named [illegible]ughter Mehitable Eche my sole Executor of the sd within riten will & Dureing her minority I do constitute & appoint the within named Elkanah Leonard to be my Executor of of will. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand & seall January 9 Anno Domini 1709 or & in ye Eight year of Her Majesties Reign over Great Britain &c.

Elizabeth Eche her Mark (seal)

signed sealed subscribed pronounced
and declared
by said Elizabeth Eche in presents of us
Edward Richmond
William Reed
Joseph Josnin

Memorandum That on the 8th day of March 1709/10 Edward Richmond & William Reed made oath that they were present & saw Elizabeth alias bette Eche sign & seall the within riten Instrument & the after aditions thereunto & heard her Declare the same to be her last will & Testament & that she was of Disposing mind & memory to the best of their understanding before me Nathaniel Thomas Judge of Probate.

Nathaniel Thomas
Justice of Probate

Province of the Massachusetts Bay Nathll Thomas Esquire Judgee of Probate, of wills, &c To all to whom these presents shall come Greeting Know ye that on the 8th Day of [illegible] 709/10 Before me in Plymouth in the County of Plymouth the will of Elizabeth Eche of Keteticut in the precinct of Midlebury in the County of Plymouth aforesaid deceased. To these presents anexed was proved approved & allowed who having while she Lived & at the time of her Death goods chatels Riches & Credits in the county aforesaid & the probate of the sd will & power of Committing administration of all & singular the goods, chatils, riches & credits of the sd Deceased by vertue 9illeg.) of appertaining unto me the administration of all & singular the goods, Chatils, Riches & Credits of the sd deceased.

A true copy

Attest John J. Daley Registar

A true Inventory off all & singular ye lands Chattels goods and credits of Elizabeth Eche Indian woman deceased prized at Ketiticut in the precinct of Midlebury on the 3d day of March annoque Domini 1710/10 by the subscriber as followeth

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| an axe 3 old howes & all the household goods & book s | | | 1-1 |
| Land and wigwams at Keiteticut & other adjacent | | | 100-1 |
| Debts due to the estate viz | | | |
| from John Poolon | 0 | 17 | 6 |
| from Saml Thomas | 0 | 6 | 9 |
| from Thomas Nimrod | 0 | 4 | 3 |
| from Thomas Hayward of Bridgewater | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| from Benjamin Soul of Plymton | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| as her dayghter Mehitable saith | | | |
| Debts due from the Estate viz. | | | |
| To Edw. Mitchell of Bridgewater | 0 | 15 | 0 |
| To Robert Crosman of Taunton | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| To Elkanah Leonard | 0 | 12 | 6 |
| as said Mehitable saith | | | |

## WHAT HAS BECOME OF OUR OLD HOUSES

To mention just a few:

The old Morton house which is considered by some to have been the first house built in Middleboro, stood on South Main Street in what now would be the middle of the highway opposite Fernandes Plaza. When the road was widened, the house was considered too fragile to move and was torn down, the lumber being used to build the two-story house on the northern corner of Crossman Avenue and School Street.

The old Miller house which stood on South Main Street approximately where stands the house built by Matthew Cushing, now owned by Mrs. Leonard A. Baker, is located at the foot of Rock Street.

The General Abiel Washburn house that stood on South Main Street about where the Bates School was located, is now at the corner of Clifford and Webster Streets.

The house that stood on the site of the Sullivan Building, now the Glidden Block, was moved to Union Street.

The house that stood where the Church of Our Savior now stands is on Coombs Street.

The Captain Drew house on North Main Street was moved to the corner of Frank Street and Shaw Avenue when the new fire station was built in 1925.

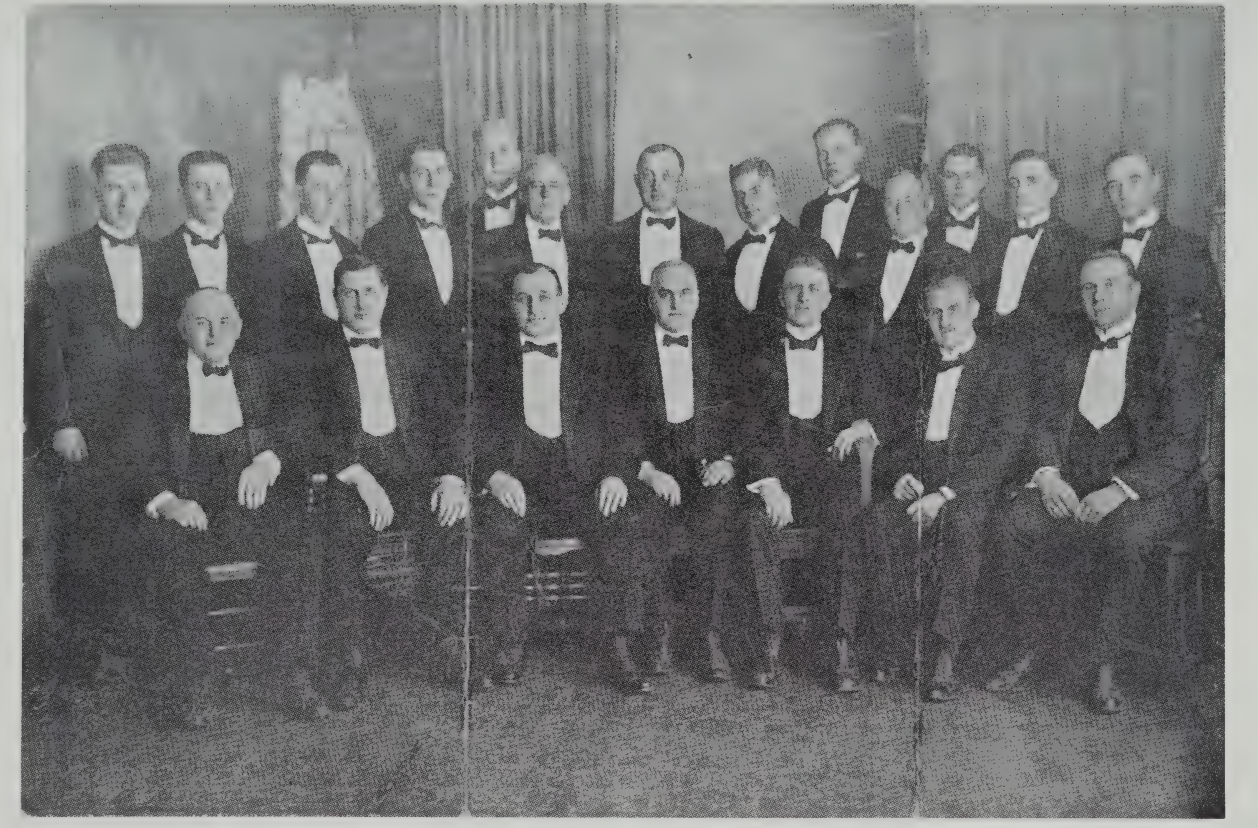
The Parker house that stood on the corner of South Main Street and Nickerson Avenue was moved when the Unitarian Church was brought from Pearl Street to that corner in 1907. The Parker house was moved to North Middleboro where it still stands, looking very much as it did in its original location, now opposite Caswell's Supermarket in North Middleboro.

If other moves occur to you, send them in and we will publish them in the next issue of the Antiquarian.

**THE CAPTAIN DREW HOUSE**

**North Main Street**

Captain Edwin Drew was in command of sailing vessels during the Civil War and retired to make his home in this little white house on North Main Street. The house was built by Allen Shaw, one of the first druggists in Middleboro. In 1925 the dwelling was moved to the corner of Frank Street and Shaw Avenue to make way for the new fire station.



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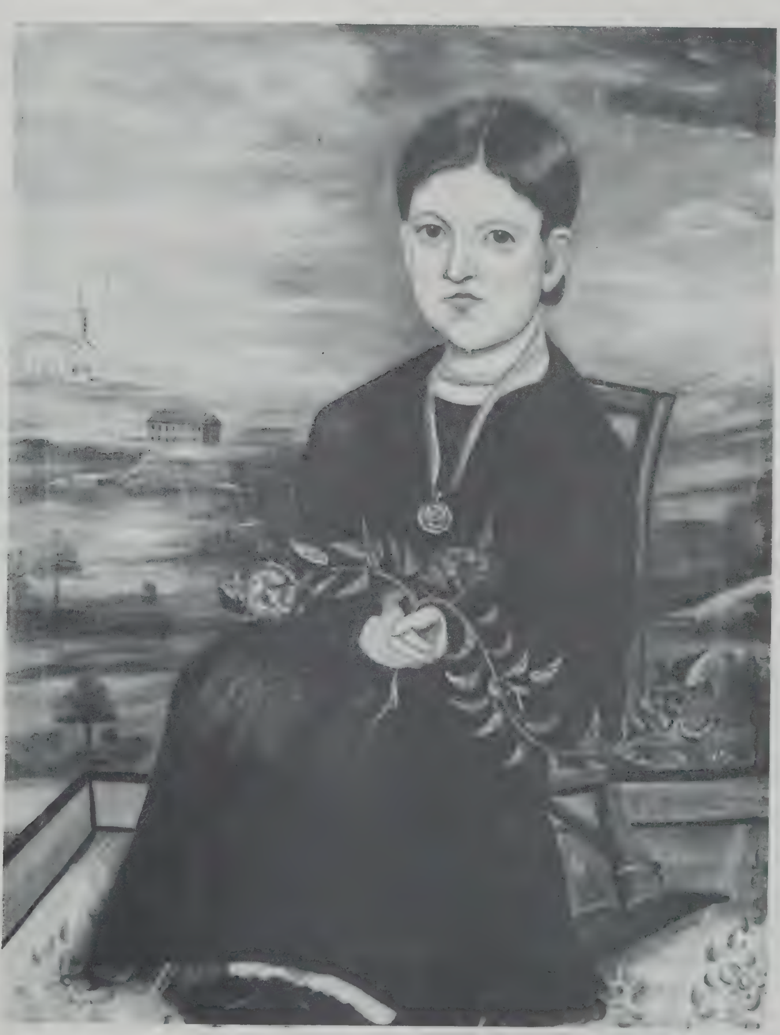

**ELIZA SMITH PROVIDENCE, R.I.**
**ca 1836**

*Courtesy of the New York State Historical Association,*
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## THE COVER

The painting of Eliza Smith is thought to have been done by the Reverend Elijah W. Barrows, who at one time was a resident of Lakeville, Massachusetts. He held a pastorate in Providence, Rhode Island, from 1834 to 1837 and may have painted the portrait at that time. The Reverend Barrows returned to Lakeville, taught school and was a member of the Lakeville school committee. He was associated with the Mullein Hill Church and died in Lakeville on May 25, 1887.

The portrait was brought to our attention by Miss E. Jane Townsend who was enrolled in the Cooperstown Graduate Program of the New York State Historical Association and in connection with her studies was doing research on the Reverend Barrows and his painting. She was unable to find more information than is related here.

## THE FORT HILL SITE

William B. Taylor

Part I

### The Site - Description and Location

The Fort Hill Site is located in North Middleboro, Massachusetts at a sharp bend in the Taunton River, in an area known as Titicut. The Indian meaning of Titicut is "The Place of a Great River." The site covers several acres and spreads along the southern and eastern bank, which is the highest ground along this stretch of the river. A fine spring seeps out of this high bank and flows into the river. Here water runs so clear, that after scraping out dead leaves and other debris, one can fill a canteen and drink without fear of contamination.

The surrounding woods and swamps abound in game and early reports describe this area as one of the best localities for fishing and hunting in the state. Until fifteen years ago one could still find large deer; since that time jacking has all but eliminated the last of these beautiful animals. However, smaller game is still plentiful and local hunters seldom return empty-handed. Rabbits, squirrel, foxes, turtles, woodchuck, racoons, muskrats, pheasants, quail, partridge and ducks are today readily available to the hunter. During Indian times moose, bear, wolves, otter, mink, beaver, turkey and geese also filled the forests and waters.

The nearby woods and fields yielded other important articles of diet, according to early history notations; wild cherries, wild plums, beachplums, wild gooseberries, huckleberries and raspberries. I have personally picked wild cranberries, wintergreen or checkerberries, blueberries, strawberries and blackberries around the Fort Hill area in recent years.

Fishing is excellent along the river and early travellers on these waters reported seeing Indians fishing off Table Rock or Sentinel Rock, which juts out into the river below the old Fort. Some 400 yards downstream, the old fishing weir is located and during the summer and early fall when the water level is low, the remains are plainly visible. One can view this weir by standing on Pratt's Bridge and looking east 50 to 75 feet upstream. Here, each spring, Indians netted hundreds of alewives which were eaten, smoked and dried for later use, or planted in each corn hill for fertilizer. Bass, shad, perch and eels were also taken in the river to be cut up and boiled in their pottage.

In the fall when the maize ripened, it was husked and dried before being placed in underground storage pits for winter use. An example of this appeared on the Taylor Farm Site where kernels of corn were recovered from such a pit. Several types of roots as Jerusalem artichokes (edible tubers) were gathered as were acorns, chestnuts and walnuts. These were shelled and dried before being powdered to thicken their pottage. Examples of charred nuts were also found in a storage pit during excavation at the Taylor Farm site.

### Historical Reference

Several early references to the Titicut area and the Fort Hill Site may be found in local history volumes. It seems appropriate to note the most important accounts.

Titicut first became known to the English settlers through the journey of Stephen Hopkins and Edward Winslow to visit Massasoit at Sowams (Warren, R.I.). With Squanto as interpreter and guide they left Patuxet (Plymouth) on the morning of July 3, 1621 and headed west on foot. In mid-afternoon the party arrived at the Indian village of Nemasket (Middleboro), where they were graciously received by the inhabitants. The Indians offered them food, which they gratefully accepted. After a fine meal of Indian bread (Maizium), shad roe and boiled acorns, Tisquantum urged them to journey a few miles further before nightfall. At sunset the party had reached the Taunton River and met more Nemasket Indians fishing upon a weir for bass. It is believed that the night was spent on the high hill near the weir, probably Fort Hill.

Winslow wrote that "the head of the river was not far from the place of their abode. Upon it are and have been many towns, the river being of a good length. The ground is very good on both sides, it being for the most part cleared. Thousands of men have lived there, which died in a great plague not long since; and pity it was to see so many goodly fields so well seated, without men to dress and manure the same." (Weston 1906:22). During the years 1617-1619 a great pestilence had swept this area, which completely wiped out some tribes (Patuxet) while skipping others. So many died that the living either couldn't or were afraid to stop and bury their dead, which accounted for the parched human bones covering many Indian campsites.

Chickataubet was one of the "Great Sachems" among the Massachusetts Indians. He was styled the "greatest sagamore in the country." His territory extended from Nishamagoguanett, near Duxbury mill, to Titicut near Taunton and to

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Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XVIII 1977 Number 2

Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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Nunckatateset, a pond of considerable size in the southwestern portion of Bridgewater adjoining Raynham and from thence in a straight line to Wanamampuke which is the head of Charles River. He died of smallpox in November 1633. His favorite resort was Titicut and his land comprised three miles on each side of the river. His son Josiah Wampatuck granted this land to the Indians in Titicut before 1644. This Indian reservation was formally deeded on June 9, 1664. (Weston 1906:10).

The first white settlement at Titicut was made in 1637 by Miss Elizabeth Poole and several associates. She was the daughter of Sir William Poole, a Knight of Colcombe, in the parish of Coliton, Devon, England. Records say she was baptized there on August 25, 1588. Her purchase was between the bounds of Cohanett (Taunton) and the Titicut weir above Pratt's Bridge. She came here for the purpose of forming a settlement and the conversion of the Indians to Christianity. (Weston 1906:28). She is credited with being one of the chief promoters of Taunton and its incorporation as a town on September 3, 1639. After her death on May 21, 1654, most of the original purchase eventually became a part of Taunton; incorporated as a city March 31, 1860 and May 11, 1864, the act was accepted.

Fort Hill derives its name from the early settlers who rightly called it so, as atop this elevation an Indian Fort once stood. Reference is made to the stronghold in another early land deed dated 1668. Josias Chickataubut, living at a place called Mattakeeset (near the present town of Pembroke) deeded to two Indians, one Pomponoho alias Peter, and Thomas Hunter, "All the lands of all sorts that are and lie on the northeasterly side of the river unto a place where the line between Middleboro land and Titicut land doth cross the path that leadeth from the said Titicut to Middleboro Mill." This deed mentioned the eastern boundary as "On a line from the old fort on the hill now standing above the Titicut weir to a point where the said line crossed the Indian path where it joins the Rhode Island path" (Dodge 1953:79). This seems to bear out a local history notation that after 1633 (Chickataubut's death), the Titicut Indians divided into two bands, separated from each other by the Taunton River.

Starting in 1662, a series of major purchases were bought by the white men from the Indians, and during the next twenty years all but small tracts around the great ponds and the Titicut reservation was sold by the Nemasket Indians. Since the two plagues of 1617-1619 and 1633 had depleted many of the Nemasket Indians, the majority of those remaining lived peacefully and allowed their conversion to Christianity. There were three churches of Praying Indians in Middleboro, located at Nemasket (Muttock), Titicut and one at Assawampsett. Each had a total membership of about thirty members. In 1734 the Indians at Muttock sold their land and moved to Titicut. The Indian church at Titicut was located on Pleasant Street about one half mile east of Fort Hill. This church continued until 1755,* when it was disbanded and the few remaining Indians united with the Congregational Church.

Here they lived quite peacefully until their extinction about 1770. One of their final contributions to this community was the gift of 38¾ acres of land for Titicut Parish in 1746. This parcel of land continues today and is the site of the present meeting-house (church), parsonage, the public green and the cemetery. This grant was given by three members of the Praying Indians in Titicut — James Thomas, John Ahanton and Stephen David. At least one, James Thomas was buried in Titicut cemetery.

In October 1957, while digging the well for my house, six skeletons were unearthed. These included five adults and one child. The discovery of copper pins and nails point to the late 1600's as the probable burial date. It was the custom of this late period to wrap bodies in an extended position in heavy bark and secure the wrappings with pins or nails. Traces of charcoal, particularly heavy over the grave of the child, were found indicating the continued practice of burning fires over the grave site to destroy and remove human scent, which might attract marauding wolves and other predatory animals. Lack of grave goods and manner of burial lead us to believe that these Indians were members of the Praying Indians of Titicut. Although some of them finally consented to burial in white-man cemeteries, most Indians still preferred to be buried in their old burial grounds.

During April of 1958, while excavating the foundation for my house by bulldozer, ten more graves were uncovered bringing the total of this group to sixteen. These too were of the same era of contact burials as the six near the well. All bones were gathered together from the backfill and reinterred. One interesting observation was the size of one skeleton. Both arm and leg bones were over two inches longer than my own. This Indian must have been an exceptionally large man — well over 6'-6" in height.

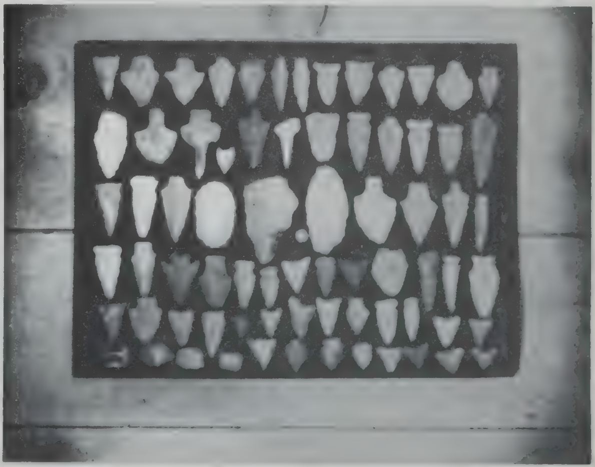

**Figure 1**

A frame of fine projectile points and miscellaneous artifacts found in the corn field from 1942-1948.

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## Previous Excavation

The Fort Hill Site is divided into two segments of equal archaeological interest. The Field Site comprises some 30 acres of open field located on the south side of the river. About half of this large tract of land is quite productive, namely the portion nearest the Taunton River. During the early 1940's (1942-48) the owner, Samuel Roberts, opened this pasture for cultivation as a corn field. This excellent site yielded several hundred fine projectile points from surface hunting during this seven year period (see Fig. No. 1 & 2). Since that decade, the field was reseeded as a hayfield until 1954, when a final plowing and reseeding was completed. During the last 22 years trees and bushes have been allowed to spring up and today most of the field is a young forest.

While watching the 1954 plowing, a cremation burial was exposed at the northerly end of the field showing small pieces of incinerated bone. Excavation of the spot uncovered a steatite boatstone of local manufacture. This is the only burial from this site thus far discovered and has probable Adena influence. Write-up of this report can be found in M.A.S. bulletin Vol. 33, Nos. 1 & 2.

During the 1972 season, William Vigneault of Taunton conducted a private dig in the northeast corner of this field. His recoveries totaled 69 artifacts but the assemblage is quite typical of field recoveries made during the 1940's. Included in his finds were projectile points, knives, scrapers, gouges, hammerstones, a whetstone, and a rare elbow stone pipe made of purplish-gray chlorite. The Field Site is basically a Late Archaic and Woodland (Ceramic) occupational area. Some Early Archaic points appeared, as did an occasional Historic artifact. However, neither period is well represented, as will be noted on the Fort Hill Bluff Site. See M.A.S. bulletin Vol. 35, Nos. 1 & 2 for this report.

*Part II will appear in the next issue.*

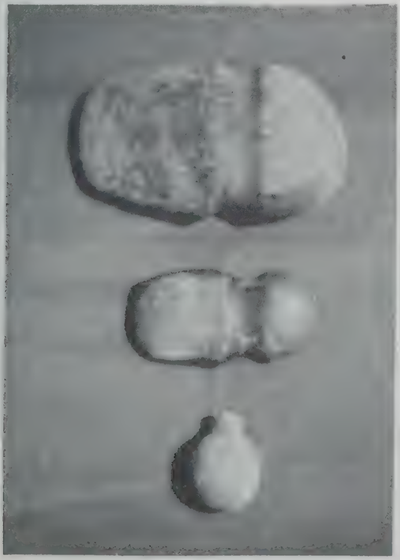

**Figure 2**

Two fine axes and plummet from Fort Hill Field Site.

## THE MORTON HOUSE

The Morton house was one of the first houses built in Middleboro after King Philip's War in 1665. It was a substantial building, about sixty feet in length, two stories high with space on the upper story for "guinea rooms" for slaves and a hall where the young people delighted in assembling for dancing. This part of town was known as Morton Town and most of the activity of the village was carried on here. There was a tavern on what is now the corner of Bourne and South Main Streets, Wood's Tavern kept by Levi Wood. Not much but scattering farms and woodland was to be seen between Morton Town and Muttock.

**THE MORTON HOUSE**

**1665-1868**

After and during the Revolutionary War, Middleboro was visited by many of those persons in high society of Boston. While Judge Peter Oliver and his son had gone to England, at Dr. Peter Oliver's house there were many a brilliant gathering of persons high in the political and social life of Boston. Madame Morton herself was a woman of great intelligence and social position and the elite who visited Dr. Oliver's house were almost always entertained at the Morton house.

The home stood at a point that now would be directly in the middle of the road on South Main Street at Prospect Street, in front of Fernandes Plaza. In 1868, South Main Street was widened and straightened and the old Morton house, over two hundred years old, was considered too fragile to move. The owner, Albert G. Pickens, caused it to be demolished and the lumber was used to build a house on Crossman Avenue.

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The television program with its many episodes entitled "Roots" was a movie version of Alex Haley's book of the same name which traced his ancestry back to Africa. Actually the book "Roots" is written as a novel, that is, fiction and while Mr. Haley did establish his lineage, many of the events appearing in both the book and the television show are not the recording of actual happenings . . . but rather a recording of events as they might have happened.

However, "Roots" has served to spark the interest of many people . . . both colored and white. Consequently many of the summer tourists will be spending time in town halls, city clerks' offices and checking out the old cemeteries. It is likely that Middleborough will have its share of visitors. We are very fortunate in Middleborough to have several old cemeteries that are well taken care of and will offer "answers" to many genealogical problems.

The Nemasket Hill Cemetery is beautifully located on the bank of the Nemasket River and is the oldest cemetery in Middleborough. Formerly called Old Burial Hill it was the town's only burial place for better than two generations. It consists of land set aside in 1662 from the original "Twenty-six Men's Purchase." Years later . . . in 1885 . . . the Nemasket Hill Cemetery Association was created by an Act of Legislature.

The Parish Burial Ground at the Green was established on two acres of land about 1717. This cemetery is typically New England in that it is near the Church. Almost every early New England town established a cemetery on ground immediately adjacent to the Church. Which means that if you or a friend of yours is seeking a burial place for a great, great, great grandfather in a strange town . . . a logical procedure is to locate the earliest Church and see if there is not a cemetery near by.

The Titicut section of Middleborough (actually North Middleborough) has its cemetery next to the Congregational Church and is on land given by James Thomas in 1750. He was one of the so-called praying Indians who had accepted Christianity. There is a monument in this cemetery dedicated to the three Indians who were converted and who gave the land for the church. Some years later David Gurney Pratt gave land to enlarge the cemetery. Since this section of Middleborough has chosen to remain as a Parish, the cemetery falls under the jurisdiction of the Titicut Parish and is governed by a board of trustees.

Another old cemetery is that located in the Warrentown section of town on Summer Street. Named Warrentown from an early ancestor of Lavinia Warren, the midget who became widely known as Mrs. Tom Thumb, one might expect that Mrs. Tom Thumb's gravestone would be found in the neighborhood cemetery. Married twice, first to Charles Stratton and second to Count Magri, Lavinia is buried in Bridgeport, Connecticut beside her first husband, Charles Stratton. Lavinia's sister, Minnie, is buried at Nemasket Hill Cemetery. This is one of the strange-but-true incidents that can serve to confuse and frustrate the family record seeker. It is most logical to *assume* that Lavinia and her sister Minnie would be buried in the Warrentown Cemetery . . . but they are not. Yet, it is 'good reasoning' to make this assumption inasmuch as James S. Bump and his wife, Huldah P. Warren, parents of Lavinia and her midget sister, Minnie, resided in the Warrentown section . . . as had their ancestors for several generations. Also, after retiring from the circus travelling with Phineas T. Barnum, the Tom Thumbs resided in the house they had built in Warrentown, near to the Bump homestead where they grew up. Perhaps these challenges of finding out where, why and when . . . are the answer to why those of us who enjoy doing genealogical research accept the challenges and keep hunting.

Purchade Cemetery is also known as the Alden Cemetery and is located on Plymouth Street between Purchade and North Middleboro. Indian remains have been found in this area and it is quite probable that it had previously been an Indian burial ground. Known also as School District Number 19, the name Purchade derived from the purchase of the land from the Indians in 1662. John Alden, a grandson of the Mayflower Pilgrim, John Alden, moved to this section of Middleborough in 1700 . . . coming here from West Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Like many other early families, the Aldens liked to travel and all members of the family did not remain in Plymouth. It is said that this John Alden of Middleborough had a son who lived to be one hundred and two years, five months and ten days old, dying in Middleborough.

In 1768 Consider Benson along with several others gave land near the Methodist Church in South Middleborough for a cemetery. This area has been enlarged several times and like most cemeteries of today, is managed by a board of trustees.

On the north side of Center Street, opposite Nevertouch Pond is the Central Cemetery. If you are familiar with Middleborough Streets you will also place this as near to one of our furniture stores. This cemetery is much later than the others. In its early days this cemetery was a Baptist Cemetery. It, too, has had other acreage added to it.

The Catholic Cemetery is known as St. Mary's and is located on Wood Street and was dedicated in May 1891. Count Magri, second husband of Mrs. Tom Thumb is buried here. He had hoped to return to his birthplace in Italy but died before he could make the trip.

There are several cemeteries in town that are no longer in use and which are properly termed family cemeteries. Lakeville, once a part of Middleborough, has several old cemeteries. There is also an old smallpox cemetery near the Plympton line. There are several 'stories' regarding the burials of smallpox victims in these private cemeteries. One is that the disease was still contagious even after death . . . another is that the burials were frequently made at night so that the townspeople would not become aware of how many deaths were occuring from the dreaded disease.

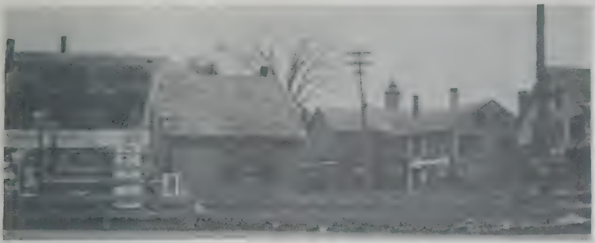
At the risk of provoking a comment that only a weird-o would want to prowl around cemeteries . . . I'll make my own comment that a tour of an old cemetery can be interesting and educational as well as rewarding genealogically in finding some answers to perplexing genealogical problems.

Cemetery inscriptions are interesting to read and frequently offer a bit of sly humor. Stone carving was an art and was handed down from father to son. Several of the best craftsmen were from Connecticut and with study, their style of carving can be recognized. Like the itinerant portrait painters, the stone carver would carve an inscription in return for his lodging and a meal or two. Then he would move on to another town. The style of the stone and the type of stone used . . . marble, granite, slate or fieldstone helps to determine the date of the cemetery . . . that is, the years when burials were made in that particular cemetery. One of the reasons why our more modern cemeteries are more attractive with well kept lawns and neat paths is the fact that 'perpetual care' came into vogue and by law the lot had to be 'kept up' . . . that is mowed and dead flowers removed periodically on any plot which had been placed under perpetual care. Over the years, cemetery associations have come into being and all lots are mowed as one of the 'policies' of the association. And with the introduction of power mowers it is a rare sight nowadays to see a cemetery where the perpetual care lots are mowed but the neighboring lot is not under perpetual care and is unmowed. Middleborough has some very attractive cemeteries . . . take a stroll in them (if it is permitted) . . . you will find it interesting. Regrettably some cemeteries are no longer 'open' to the casual visitor . . . willful destruction has forced the caretakers and associations to put them 'off limits' . . . another outcome of our modern living.

## ALDEN GENEALOGY

*Courtesy of Albert Alden, Palmer, Mass.*

1. Capt. John Alden, born 1599, in England. Died Sept. 12, 1687 at Duxbury, Mass., aged 88. Married Priscilla Molines (Mullins) in 1621 at Plymouth, Mass. Said by Bradford to have had 11 children; only eight named in the discharge of the administrator of his estate: John 1622-1702, Joseph 1624-1697, Elizabeth 1625-1717, Johnathan -1697, Sara - - -, Ruth - - - -1672, Mary - - - -1688, David - - - -1719.
2. Joseph Alden (2) born 1624, died Feb. 1697, aged 73. Married Mary Simmonds (Symons). Lived in Bridgewater. Admitted freeman in 1659. Had five children: Isaac - - -, Joseph 1667-1747, John - - - -1730, Elizabeth - - - -1705, Mary - - -.
3. (Deacon) Joseph Alden (2) born 1667, died Dec. 22, 1747, aged 80. Married Hannah Dunham, (1670-Jan. 13, 1748) in 1690. Lived in So. Bridgewater. Had 10 children: Daniel Jan. 29, 1691-1767, Joseph Aug. 26, 1693-Dec. 9, 1695, Eleazer Sept. 27, 1694-1773, Hannah Feb. 1696-1777. Mary April 10, 1699-1762, Joseph Sept. 5, 1700-Oct. 5, 1700, Jonathan Dec. 3, 1703-Nov. 10, 1704, Samuel Aug. 20, 1705-1785, Mehetabel Oct. 18, 1707-1737, Seth July 6, 1710-1784.
4. Samuel Alden (8) born Aug. 20, 1705 at South Bridgewater, died 1785 aged 80. Married Abiah Edson of North Middleboro, Mass. in 1728. Lived in Titicut, Mass. Had 9 children: Abiah 1729-1797, Mehetabel 1732- - -, Sarah 1734- - -, Samuel 1736-1816, Josiah 1738- - -, Simon 1740 - - -, Silas- - -, Mary- - -, Hosea- - -. In 1752 married Rebecca Washburn.
5. Samuel (4) born 1736, died 1816, aged 81. Married Hannah Williams of Raynham, Mass. Lived in Abington, Mass. Had nine children: Daniel 1763-Sept. 10, 1799, Silas 1765-April 18, 1842, Joseph - - - -1851, Samuel - - - -1857, William 1722-Feb. 16, 1856, Hosea - - -, Hannah 1775? (before 1803), Seth 1777-1838, Hosea - - - -Mar. 5, 1837.
6. Daniel Alden (1) born 1763, died Sept. 10, 1799, aged 36. Married Sarah (Sally) Cary (b.1765-Mar. 5, 1846) on Dec. 18, 1786. Had four children: Otis 1788-1825, Daniel June 10, 1791 - - -, Sally - - -, Alpheus April 16, 1798 - - -.
7. Otis Alden (1) born 1788, died Sept. 1825, aged 37. Married Harriet Adams (Dec. 7, 1790-Dec. 7, 1825) of Jay, Maine. Had five children: Sally Sept. 29, 1810-May 18, 1842, Harriet Mar. 4, 1812-Jan. 20, 1885, Otis Cary July 4, 1814-Oct. 14, 1862, Albert Oct. 24, 1817-Feb. 1901, Joseph Oct. 1824-1826.
8. Albert Alden (4) born Oct. 24, 1817 at Jay, Maine, died Feb. 1901 at Middleboro, Mass. Married Charlotte Bates Comey (May 19-1818-April 29, 1849) on May 14, 1837. Had five children: Charlotte Lavina Aug. 23, 1841- - - -, Albert Henry Oct. 26, 1842-Aug. 3, 1862, Harriet Eliza May 10, 1845-July 24, 1846, Leslier Oct. 31, 1846-April 5, 1847, Arthur Bates April 18, 1849-Dec. 15, 1896.
9. Arthur Bates Alden (5) born April 18, 1849 died Dec. 15, 1896 at Middleboro, Mass. Married Mary Harlow Soule (Mar. 23, 1852-May 1843) daughter of Capt. John Martin Soule, on Nov. 25, 1874 at Middleboro, Mass. Had four children: John Henry Harlow Oct. 8, 1874-March 9, 1947, Arthur Leslie May 27, 1822-April 21, 1886, Betty (Betsy) July 17, 1883-June 15, 1961, Albert Nov. 27, 1890-.
10. Albert Alden (3) born Nov. 27, 1890 at Middleboro, Mass. Married Ruth Wentworth Starbuck (Jan. 10, 1893, died Nov. 5, 1969) on Oct. 3, 1914 at Cambridge, N.Y. Had three children, Dorothy Elizabeth, Aug. 15, 1915-, John Starbuck Nov. 20, 1919-, Arthur Bates Alden, April 25, 1922-.



**THE OLD CORNER LOT**

In 1895, before construction of the Bank Building, corner South Main and Center Streets. Billboard behind the grandstand and the lights, advertising "The American Theatre Company." Sign on the building is announcing Wood and Coal for sale. The town pump was also located on the "Corner Lot."

## EVOLUTION OF THE "CORNER LOT"

Much of the information contained herein was gleaned from an article in the Middleboro Gazette published at the time the new and present Bank Building was about to be erected in 1875.

The "Corner Lot," located where Center and South Main Streets meet, was considered the most desirable building site in town. In the early 1800's it was occupied by a small building owned by Major Levi Peirce and used by him as a general store. In 1814, Major Peirce became a partner in the cotton mill built at the upper dam (now Wareham Street) and known as the Nemasket Company, named for the river on which the mill was located. From this time, the store was operated by the Company. In the same year, 1814, Major Peirce was appointed postmaster of Middleboro. Up to that time there had been no post office in the center of the town, all mails being received at "The Green" in the eastern section, or at Sampson's Tavern in Lakeville, then a part of Middleboro. Thus, the first post office in Middleboro was located in the little building on the "Corner Lot."

Friday evening, December 15, 1871, was a memorable night in the history of Middleboro. The small building contained what was known as the "town safe," and many townspeople kept their wealth in it. On that memorable evening burglars entered the building and blew up the safe. As no one kept a detailed account of their property in the safe, no accurate accounting could be made of the loss, but it was figured at least $13,650 in bonds and railroad stock shares were taken; how much cash no one knew. The thieves "borrowed" a horse and carriage and drove to Taunton where they took an early train for New York. No further trace of them was found but it was felt the perpetrators of the crime were experts in their craft.

When this post office was established, there was one mail received and one sent out each day. The mail averaged fifty or sixty letters a day and a few papers and parcels. The postmaster's salary amounted to about $500 per year.

The post office remained in this building about seven years. Afterward the building served many purposes: quarters for the selectmen, town clerk, treasurer and collector, assessors. After the Civil War the pension office was here and the 4th District Court held its first meeting here. It also held the office of the N.Y. & B.D. Express Company, a merchant tailor, a barbershop, office for selling coal and wood, an insurance office, a shoemaker's shop, and others.

Many of the same problems existed in 1875 as exist one hundred years later. Referring to the bandstand located on the Corner Lot, a Gazette article of 1875 stated:

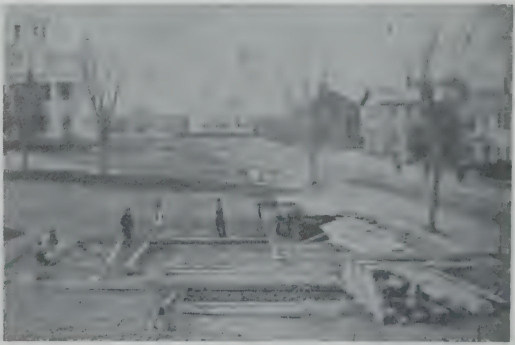
"As much as we appreciate the delightful band concerts of the summer, we are willing that the band stand should go but sincerely hope that a more appropriate location may be found. Possibly the need of a public park will be more loudly emphasized. The fact that a growing town the size of Middleboro has not an inch of public pleasure ground ought to awake its citizens to an active effort to secure some convenient location for a future park before the land is appropriated for other purposes."

The little building came to a sad end on a night in October, 1866. It was discovered enveloped in flames. The only means of extinguishing a fire at that time was with water from a cistern on the grounds of the Jenks homestead on North Main Street, and the only apparatus consisted of a hand-drawn tub engine. Needless to say, the building was a total loss.

To take the place of the one destroyed by fire, a building was brought from North Main Street. Leonard & Eaton operated a shoe factory on that street and were in the process of building a small addition to the factory. Sidney Tucker was now the postmaster and, looking for a suitable location for a post office, purchased the addition from Leonard & Eaton and had it moved on to the Corner Lot, added eight feet to its dimensions and it became the new post office.

It is interesting to note the details of the transaction when the previous postmaster, Jacob E. Shaw, transferred the complete assets of the post office to the new postmaster, Sidney Tucker. The entire outfit was as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 89 | 12 ct. stamps | $10.68 |
| 2,200 | 3 ct. stamps | 66.00 |
| 375 | 1 ct. stamps | 3.75 |
| 1 stamp | | 1.00 |



**ANOTHER CORNER LOT**

On the next corner, west of the "Corner Lot," is another building under construction. Thatcher's Block was located on this corner. Peirce Academy is seen in the background and across the street the building that later contained the F. N. Whitman Department Store and next to it the house later known as the Ryder house, torn down to make way for a business lot.

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## MIDDLEBORO DAY AT THE MUSEUM

The Executive Committee of the Middleborough Historical Museum has in the planning state a "Middleboro Day" at the Museum to be observed July 23, 1977. All Middleboro residents are urged to attend. There will be no admittance fee. It is hoped that such a day may encourage the many residents of Middleboro who have never availed themselves of the opportunity to visit their Museum.

## MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

### February 7, 1977

At the mid-winter meeting thirty-six new members joined the Middleborough Historical Association: Margaret Abramson, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bergman, Elizabeth Campbell, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cifelli, Edward T. Finneran, Mr. and Mrs. William Gadraitis, Robert A. Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kellogg, Mrs. Margaret Korpinen, Lois W. Lang, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mather, Mr. and Mrs. William Mathews, Jr. and Mrs. Robert Mizaris, Mrs. Judith Morris, Mrs. Thelma Oldfield, Jr. and Mrs. J. Bernard Otterson, Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon Phinney, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Raymond, Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. Rooney, Paul A. Sybertz, Jr., Marion Willard, Doris M. Williams, all from Middleboro. Also, Mrs. Lawrence Fahey, Florida; Mrs. Marion H. Leonard, Lakeville; Mrs. Alice C. Meeks, Brockton; Mrs. Elizabeth H. Hebb, Michigan.

Speaker of the evening was William Perkins of Halifax who gave an interesting and informative talk on "Weeds and History." Following the meeting refreshments were served by Mrs. Lyman Butler, Mrs. John Nichols, and Mrs. Nellie Thomas.

### April 4, 1977

The spring meeting of the Association was past-presidents night. During the business meeting preceding the program, the secretary read the following names of new members: Mr and Mrs. Jethro Ashley, Mr. John Brown, Mr. J. Peter Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Francis A. Collosi, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Griffith, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. E. Curtis Hall, Mr. and Mrs. James Hager, Dr. and Mrs. Sylvio Landry, all of Middleboro, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Beals of Carver and Mr. Francis G. Byrne, Connecticut.

Thomas Fahey, program chairman, introduced Thomas Walsh, a past president, who substituted for Joseph F. Riley as master of ceremonies. The first past president called upon to speak was Ernest E. Thomas who mentioned especially the late Peter Ramsey, for many years a barber in Middleboro, a most remarkable gentleman. Robert Cushing recalled some of the interesting programs of past years. Walter Rudziak reminisced about his years as president and expressed his appreciation for the privilege of working with such a fine group. Two past presidents unable to be present sent papers to be read: G. Ward Stetson and Lyman Butler. Mrs. Lawrence B. Romaine, not a past president but presently curator of the Historical Museum sponsored by the Association, gave a history of the Museum from the days when the historical collection was housed in one room of the public library, to the establishment of the museum in 1960, now a small Sturbridge Village consisting of six buildings. Following the meeting refreshments were served by A. Kingman Pratt, Ruth Gates, and Mrs. Romaine.

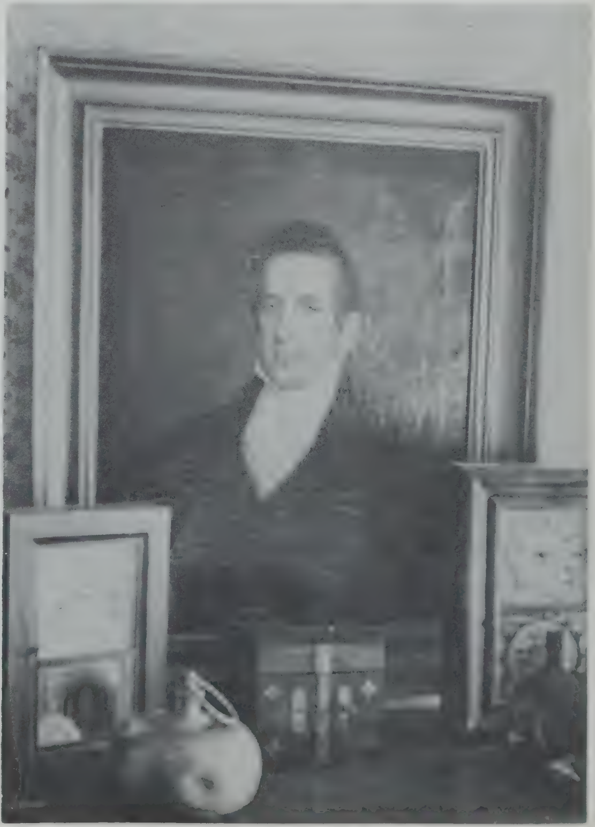
## JAMES MANNING LEONARD

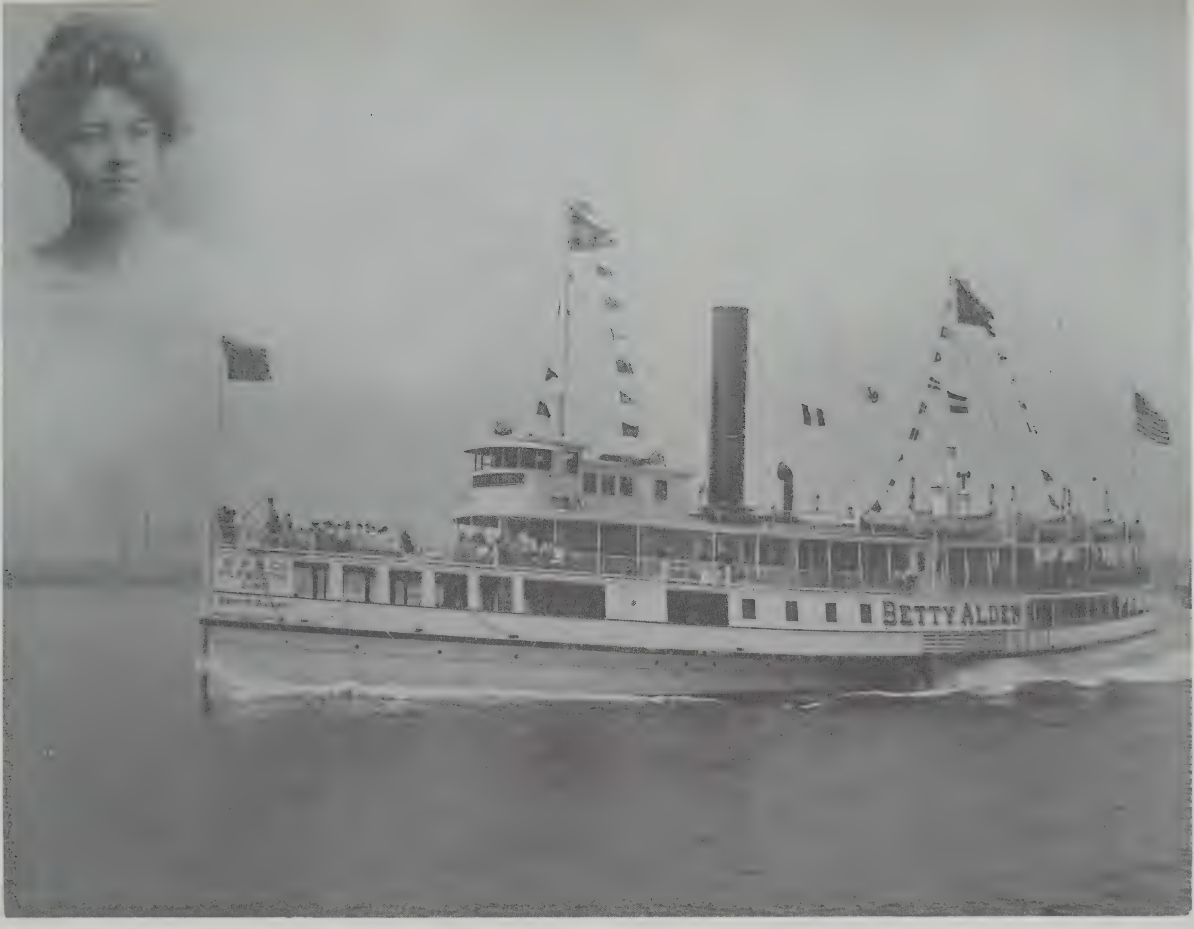
### A Little Known Artist of Middleboro

James Manning Leonard was brother-in-law to Cephas Thompson, a brother of Olivia, Cephas Thompson's wife. Cephas, a famous artist, was born in Middleboro and painted many fine portraits of the prominent citizens of the town, many of which are in the Middleborough Historical Museum. Mr. Leonard apprenticed himself to his brother-in-law to learn the art of portrait painting. He became a skillful portraitist and practiced his profession for some years in Middleboro.

In the Middleborough Historical Museum are two of his portraits, one of Freelove Thompson, daughter of Benjamin and Mary Bourne Thompson, and the other of his own daughter, Othalia Adeline Leonard.

The portrait accompanying this article is one painted by Mr. Leonard of Abner Bourne, born in Middleboro in 1781. This obviously is not the Captain Abner Bourne who was a prominent citizen in Middleboro, commanded a company in the Revolutionary War and built a fine home on the corner of South Main Street and Court End Avenue, and whose son, Major William Bourne built what was then considered a mansion on South Main Street where now stands the home of Elwyn B. Lynde. If Abner Bourne of the portrait was born in 1781, it is obvious he could not have served in the Revolutionary War. Little information can be found about him. The portrait is now owned by a Rhode Island family.





## BETTY ALDEN OF MIDDLEBORO
## CHRISTENS THE BOAT "BETTY ALDEN"

Betty Alden was a direct descendant of Pilgrim John Alden. In 1908, Betty was chosen to christen the boat "Betty Alden" launched at the Atlantic Works in Boston to run on the Plymouth route of the Nantasket Beach Steamboat Company.

Betty Alden married Dr. James H. Burkhead of Middleboro. Her name will be found in the Alden genealogy appearing elsewhere in this issue of the *Antiquarian*.

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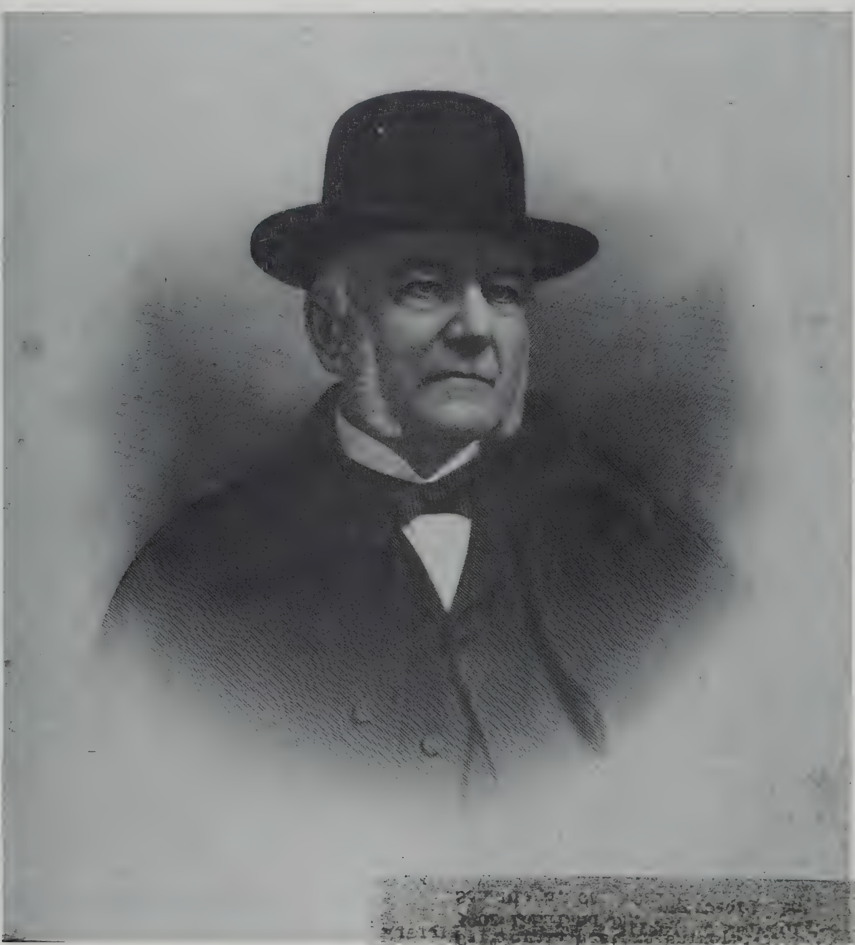

**JAMES H. HARLOW**
**September 11, 1814 - June 20, 1906**

James Henry Harlow was one of the eminent citizens of Middleboro in the middle 1800's. He was the second president of the Middleboro National Bank and representative to the general court, 1880-90. He was well known as a dealer in carriages. In 1850, Mr. Harlow became the owner of the land and buildings on South Main Street adjacent to the old high school, later known as Bates School. The property was purchased from Zacharaiah Eddy, the noted lawyer of Eddyville, and Mr. Harlow lived there with his daughter, Maria Louisa, who married James, son of Colonel Peter H. Peirce. Mr. Harlow was an impressive figure, readily recognized because of the flowing cape that always was a part of his outdoor apparel.

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**MIDDLEBORO and LAKEVILLE**

## HARLOW GENEALOGY

1. William Harlow, (Sergt) appeared as a young man in Lynn in 1637. Moved to Sandwich and then to Plymouth, where he married in 1649 Rebecca Bartlett. They had four children: William, 1650; Samuel, 1652; Rebecca, 1655; William, 1657. In 1658 he married Mary Faunce and they had five children: Mary, 1659; Repentance, 1660; John, 1662; Benjamin, . . . Nathaniel, 1664. In 1665 he married a third time to Mary Shelley, and they had five children: Hannah, 1666; Bathsheba, 1667; Joanna, 1669; Mehitable, 1672; Judith, 1676.

2. William Harlow (4) born 1657, married Lydia Cushman. They had eight children: Elizabeth, 1683; Thomas, 1686, Robert . . .; Isaac . . .; Lydia . . . ; Mary . . . ; Rebecca . . . ; William.

3. Thomas Harlow (2) born 1686, married Jedidah Churchill. They had seven children: Thomas, 1712; Elizabeth, 1715; Jonathan, 1718; Lydia, 1721; Eleazer, 1723; Jedidah, 1720; Nathaniel, 1729.

4. Jonathan Harlow (3) born March 22, 1718, married in 1742 to Sarah Holmes. They had seven children: Ansel, 1743; Jonathan, 1746; Sarah, 1751; Jedidah, 1755; Clarissa . . . ; Lucy, 1758; Mary, 1761.

5. Jonathan Harlow (2) born at Plymouth monument grounds Jan. 1, 1746 or 1747. Fought in Revolution. Married Betty Blackmer (born Nov. 19, 1746) daughter of Deacon John Blackmer of Plymouth. They had ten children: Mercey, 1770; Léwes, 1772; Eleazer, 1774; Jonathan, 1776; John, 1778; Lemewell, 1780; Ivety, 1783; Stephen, 1789-1853; Betsey . . . ; Branch, 1793.

6. Stephen Harlow (8) born July 7, 1789, died March 24, 1853, aged 64. Married on Feb. 3, 1809 to Patience Ellis, born June, 1787, died March 11, 1859. They had seven children: Sarah, June 25, 1810; Stephen, April 5, 1812; James Henry, Sept. 11, 1814; Betsey Blackmer, March 11, 1817; Mary Lothrop, March 25, 1820; Jonathan Edwards, May 2, 1823; Ivory Hovey, Nov. 3, 1827.

7. Betsey Blackmer Harlow (4) born March 11, 1817, died Aug. 11, 1905, aged 88. Married Capt. John Martin Soule (Oct. 9, 1815 - April 1, 1891) 1st child of Nathan Perkins Soule (1792 - Nov. 14, 1867) and Charity Brett (1791 - Sept. 6, 1880) on Aug. 1, 1848. They had one child: Mary Harlow, March 23, 1852.

8. Mary Harlow Soule, born March 23, 1852, died May . . . 1943, aged 91. Married Arthur Bates Alden (April 18, 1849 - Dec. 15, 1896) in Middleboro on Nov. 25, 1874. They had four children: John Henry Harlow (Oct. 8, 1878 - March 9, 1947) Arthur Leslie, May 27, 1882 - April 21, 1886; Betty, July 17, 1883 - June 15, 1961; Albert, Nov. 27, 1890-

## THE FOUNDERS OF EDDYVILLE

by Susan Atwood

(A junior in Middleboro High School)

About ten years after the Pilgrim's landed in Plymouth, the first Eddy family established themselves on New England soil. Their earliest known roots were in Plymouth, Massachusetts. The settlement of Eddyville was established by Joshua Eddy, and his descendents helped develop a thriving community in East Middleborough. A closer look at these first settlers provides an interesting account of life in New England.

Samuel Eddy was among the first of the Eddy family to come over from England. They departed from England August 10, 1630 aboard the ship the *Handmaid*. They arrived at Plymouth Harbor on the 29th of October, 1630, after a stormy twelve weeks at sea. Samuel then married and settled in Plymouth. Later, he and his family moved to Swansea, Massachusetts.

In 1661, Samuel was involved in the 26 Men's Purchase. This purchase was between the Nemasket River and the Tippacunnett Brook. This purchase insured the acquisition of land for his two oldest sons, Zachariah and Obadiah. This purchase established Samuel as one of the first property owners of Middleberry (the name of Middleborough at that time). Samuel died on November 12, 1687, fifty years after staking his claim in America.

Obadiah, one of the sons of Samuel, was born in 1645. During his younger years he lived in Plymouth and Sandwich. When he was between the ages of fifteen and sixteen he became an apprentice in Sandwich to learn the trade of shoemaking. Later, he married Elizabeth Freeman of Sandwich.

Around the year of 1673, Obadiah moved to Middleborough, and became interested in town affairs. Between the years of 1675 and 1692 he was the surveyor of highways. In 1679, 1681, 1683, and 1689, he was a constable. Also, during 1690 and 1694, he was a selectman for Middleborough.

When King Philip's War broke out in 1675, Obadiah and his family were living in Middleborough (it is now part of Halifax). They travelled to a fort in Plymouth because of the frequent Indian attacks. When the war was over Obadiah was one of the first to return to Middleborough and rebuild his home.

Obadiah was survived by twelve children, one particular son was Samuel who was born in 1675. He made and repaired wheels for a living. He also occupied much of his father's estate, which was most of Eddyville. When Samuel died he was survived by five children, one of whom was Zachariah.

Zachariah received from his father the Eddy Homestead. He was an enthusiastic Whig, and had many spirited contests with Judge Oliver. Zachariah was the father of twelve children. One of his best known children was Joshua Eddy.

Joshua was born on April 23, 1748 in Middleborough. He was really the main founder of Eddyville. Joshua resided in Eddyville with his wife Lydia Paddock (Lydia was a descendent of Elder John Faunce, the Pilgrim) for his entire life. Joshua was a serious man devoted to his religion, and always attended public affairs. He went to the Congregational Church, commonly known as the Church of the Green, every Sunday.

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Middleboro, Mass.
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Mertie E. Romaine ........ Editor

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Joshua joined the army in 1775 as a private in Colonel Cotton's regiment. He was at the seige of Boston in 1776. Joshua was appointed lieutenant, and in 1777 he was offered a captain's commission in Colonel Gamaliel Bradford's regiment, but only on the usual condition of furnishing a certain number of men for three years. Before leading on his recruits, he complied with a general order to go down to the hospital at Braintree "to take" the smallpox. He then started immediately, and took a large quantity of clothing, provisions and equipment. He did not reach Ticonderoga, but fell in with American forces at Hubbardstown on the retreat. His company suffered severely in that disastrous affair. The baggage was put on board boats to go to Shenesborough (Whitehall), but was taken and destroyed by the British. He remained at Albany with the army till they rallied, marched back to meet Burgoyne, and was present at Saratoga where he was compelled to surrender. In October they were reinforced by several brigades and fought with courage. He used to speak of the booty of Burgoyne's camp after his retreat as amazing. The evening after the surrender of Burgoyne they had orders to proceed down the river to meet General Vaughan. They pursued him to King's Bridge, he retired into the city of New York, and they passed over into New Jersey. They went into winter quarters with the rest of the army under General Washington in December. Captain Eddy did not remain there long, for on hearing of the death of his father, he applied to General Heath for a discharge. His request being refused, he applied to the Commander-in-Chief, but on account of the scarcity of officers, he was allowed only an indefinite furlough. He immediately returned home, and spent the winter in settling the affairs of his father.

The next May he returned to the army and was in the battle of Monmouth, June 28. His regiment was not called into action, but was employed in scouting and foraging. At the close of the battle he heard General Washington in great excitement and pale with rage accuse General Lee of disobedience of orders, saying with an oath, "Had you taken the position with your command as I directed, you would have captured the whole British army".[1]

At the close of the Revolutionary War, he settled upon his large farm, which he cultivated with great care. He kept a store on the Green and built a large blast furnace in Waterville.

Joshua and Lydia had ten children. They were:

Joshua Eddy born February 3, 1779,
Zachariah Eddy born December 6, 1780,
Ebenezer Eddy born March 12, 1783,
Nathaniel Eddy born September 5, 1785,
Lydia Eddy born July 23, 1787,
William Shaw Eddy born December 19, 1789,
Jane Eddy born June 6, 1792,
Morton Eddy born May 7, 1795, died October 3, 1796,
Morton Eddy born October 3, 1797, died 1888,
John Milton Eddy born February 21, 1800.[2]

A well-founded legend has it that as each son considered marriage, Joshua offered to build him a house and give him a hundred acres of land. Five of the seven sons did settle in Eddyville, reasonably accounting for the present village. These men continued operation of their father's enterprises for many years. The village prospered to the point where it supported stores, a Post Office, and a nearby railroad station.[3] At one time it was in the yard of Nathaniel Eddy.

Joshua continued being active in the affairs of the church, and the town. He also owned furnaces in Plympton and Carver. This is where they manufactured iron utensils, pots, pans, kettles, and other iron products. The iron was taken from Lake Assawampsett and other ponds in the area. Later, when the supply of iron was decreasing, they had to ship the iron in from New Jersey to New Bedford, and then it was carried by a wagon or an oxcart to the Furnace. Some of the iron was brought from Fall River by boat up the Taunton River to North Middleborough and over the roads to Waterville. Also, they collected old iron, and recast the old with the new iron ore.

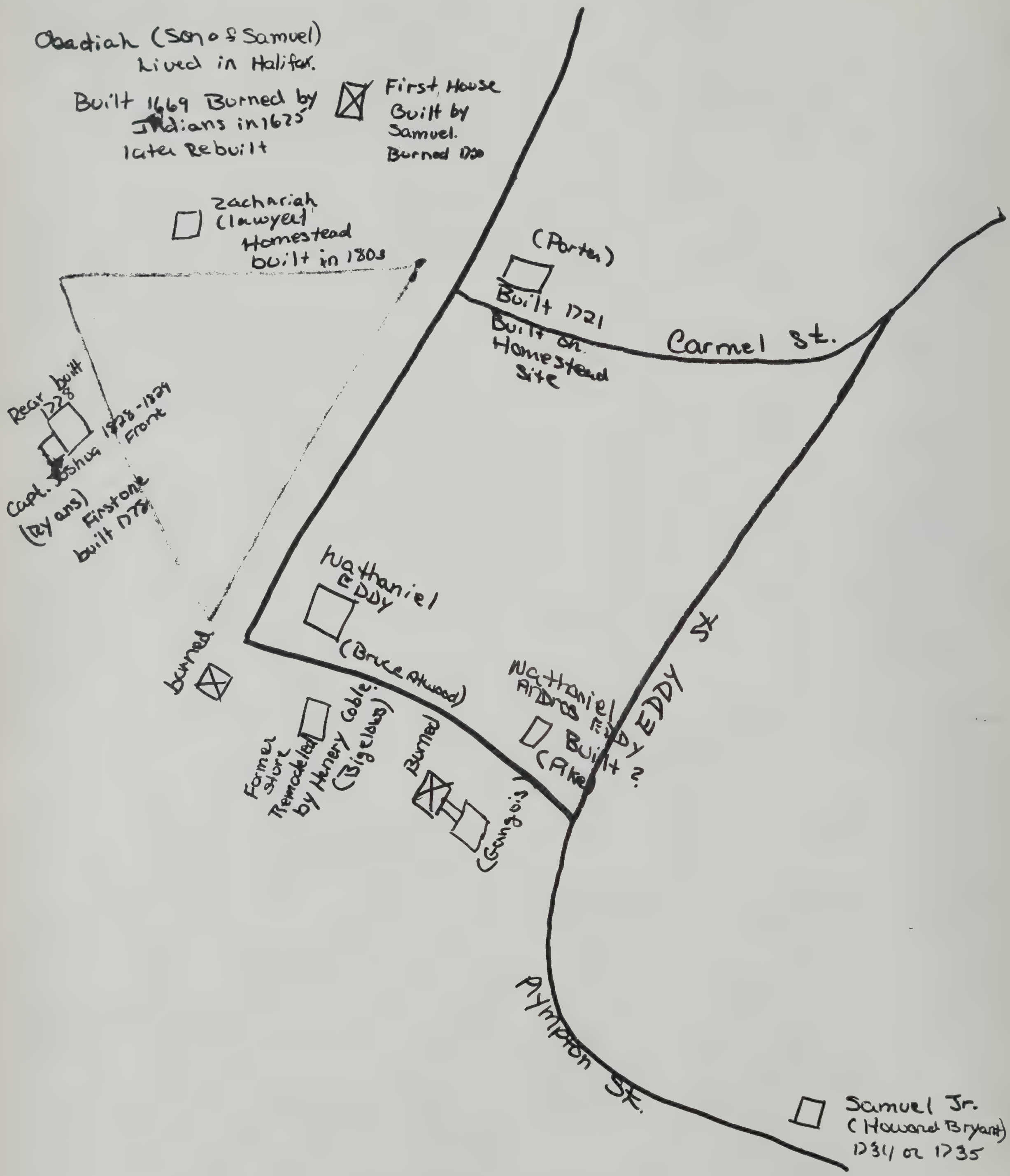
When Joshua Eddy died he left the Furnace to his sons William, and Nathaniel. William later took over after Nathaniel retired. By the year 1840, manufacturing of iron utensils dropped, and shovel making began at a rapid increase.

Zachariah Eddy, Joshua's second son, graduated from Brown University in 1799. He taught school for several years, and then he moved to Eddyville to open up his law office in the Homestead. He would walk twelve miles each week to read law with Judge Thomas, another lawyer. He was recognized as one of the foremost lawyers of his day, and was a warm friend of Daniel Webster. Joshua worked on many cases with this famous man.

There are many stories concerning the Eddy family. One of these stories is about Zachariah while in church. There was a custom that when the congregation sang they would all face the choir. During this singing if Zachariah happened to sneeze, or cough, he would pick up his singing where he left off. If he didn't finish singing with the congregation, he would finish at his own time.

The Sunday services started Saturday night at sunset, and lasted till Sunday night at sunset. There was no work to be done during these twenty-four hours. The women served cold meals, and there was no pleasure driving. The only driving that was to be done, was to and from church. Feeding the animals, and chopping the wood for the stoves was the only work done that day.[4]

The Eddy family made its mark on Colonial America by establishing a strong, and prosperous community called Eddyville. Their strength is also evident in the survival of their family. The Eddys throughout their lives were involved in church and town affairs. Some members of the family are standouts. Samuel was involved in the 26 Men's Purchase, Nelson Eddy was popular as a singer and performer, and in our own time, G. Ward Stetson, served as a town selectman and member of the state legislature. These men stand as examples of all who, in their own way, helped build the country.

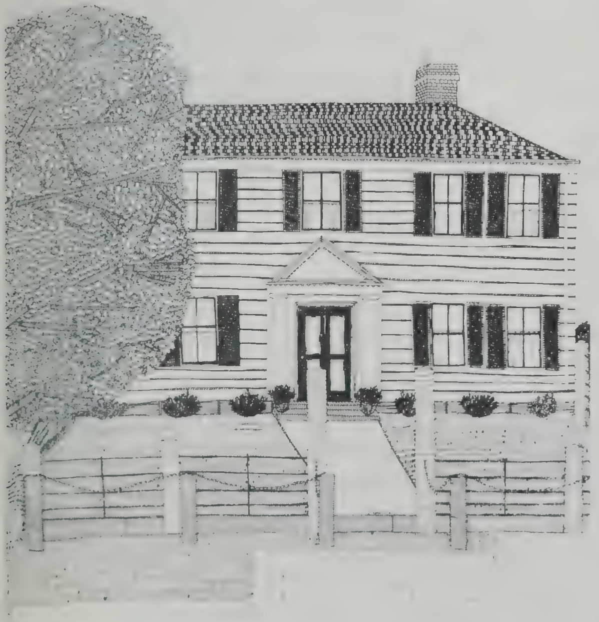

Obadiah (Son of Samuel)
Lived in Halifax.
Built 1669 Burned by Indians in 1675 later Rebuilt
First House Built by Samuel. Burned 1720
Zachariah (lawyer) Homestead built in 1803
(Porter)
Built 1721
Built on Homestead Site
Carmel St.
Rear built 1728
1828-1829 Front
Capt. Joshua (Ryans)
Firstone built 1778
Nathaniel EDDY
(Bruce Atwood)
burned
Former store Remodeled by Henery Coble. (Bigelows)
Burned
(Gangois)
Nathaniel Andros EDDY Built ?
(Ake
EDDY St
Plympton St.
Samuel Jr. (Howard Bryant) 1734 or 1735

## NOTES

1. Weston, Thomas. *History of the Town of Middleboro, Mass.*, p. 545.
2. Eddy Family Association. *The Eddy Family in America* p. 164.
3. G. Ward Stetson. "Eddyville." *Middleborough Antiquarian* Sept., 1969.
4. Arthur Barrett Miller. "Sunday in Eddyville in the 1880's. *Eddy Family Association Family Bulletin,* Sept. 1969.

## EDDY HOMESTEAD

1. Eddy Homestead — Zachariah Eddy, his father was Joshua, built in 1803.
2. Captain Joshua, Sr. — The house was burned in 1828, the rear was the only part saved. It was rebuilt in the same year. Part of the rear was built in 1778.
3. Samuel Eddy — The house was built in 1702 which is now the rear of the present Homestead, it later burned in 1720, and was rebuilt on the Homestead site in 1721.
4. Nathaniel Eddy — His father was Joshua Eddy, his house was built in 1811-1812.
5. Nathaniel Andros Eddy — Built in ?
6. Samuel, Jr. — Built in 1732. (Historians say 1725)
7. Ebenezer Eddy — His father was Joshua Eddy, his house was built in 1807.
8. William Shaw Eddy — His father was Joshua Eddy, his house was built in 1820?



**EDDY HOMESTEAD, MIDDLEBOROUGH**
Reproduction of original drawing by Marie Francis

## MUSEUM NOTES

On September 17th a successful auction was held for the benefit of the Historical Museum. It was a rainy day, but fortunately arrangements had been made to rent a large green and white striped tent — without it the auction could not have taken place. A goodly number attended and the proceeds amounted to approximately $1,600.

Included in this sum were contributions from out-of-town members. A letter was sent them suggesting since they were unable to participate in many of the activities of the association, they might like to make a contribution toward the auction. The response was gratifying and the Museum Committee wishes to express their gratitude to these contributors, as well as to everyone who donated articles for the auction.

Tragedy struck the Museum on or about the night of October twenty-eighth. On the morning of the twenty-ninth, it was discovered thieves had entered the museum by means of a jimmied window, and had stolen fourteen Springfield rifles, 1865, each marked "S.S. Trenton" and used in the Civil War; one small drum and one large drum used in the Civil War; one War of 1812 uniform; one Revolutionary War uniform; a Revolutionary War flag; an iron powder horn, and two marine paintings by Stubbs.

## PROGRAM
## 1977-1978
### Middleborough Historical Association

November 5, 1977 — Burkland School Musicorium
"Whaling Out of New Bedford." Presented by Ann Brengle of the Whaling Museum of New Bedford. A slide presentation.

November 18, 1977 — Middleborough High School Auditorium
"South Pacific." A presentation by the Taunton Little Theatre Group for the benefit of the Middleborough Historical Museum Endowment Fund.

February 6, 1978 — Burkland School Auditorium
Speaker — Mr. Frederick E. Eayrs, Jr., from the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

April 3, 1978 — Burkland School Auditorium
"How to Raise $50,000 and Restore a Wreck." A slide presentation by Mr. Raymond Rider of Wareham, Mass.

June 5, 1978 — Riverside Restaurant, Middleboro
Annual meeting. Banquet at 6:30 P.M.
Program: "Historic American Weathervanes" presented by Marilyn E. Strauss of West Barnstable. Illustrated with slides and miniature weathervanes.

## APOLOGIA

We apologize for the delay in the appearance of the last issue of the Antiquarian, an issue that was supposed to reach you in July and did not arrive until October. There were continued difficulties with the printing process resulting in the long delay. We sincerely hope that subsequent issues of the Antiquarian will be received on a more regular basis.

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*in Historical Heritage*

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# TWIGS & BRANCHES

of

Olde Middleborough

in

Plymouth County

Massachusetts

by

*MRS. CHARLES DELMAR TOWNSEND*

*Certified Genealogist*

In 1853 the Phelps, Fanning & Co. located at 195 Broadway in New York City published a book entitled *Fanning's Illustrated Gazetteer of the United States,* and in accordance with the style of the period, the book also had a lengthy subtitle as follows: 'giving the location, physical aspect, mountains, rivers, lakes, climate, productive and manufacturing resources, commerce, government, education, general history, etc. of the states, territories, counties, cities, towns, and post-offices in the American Union with the population and other statistics from the census of 1850, illustrated with seals and thirty-one state maps in counties and fourteen maps of cities.' The book measures about six by nine and a quarter inches, bound in dark brown hardcover and has 490 pages. The information is alphabetically arranged.

In 1853 there is only one entry for a town (or city) called Middleborough. The entry reads . . . "MIDDLEBOROUGH, p. t. Plymouth co. Mass. 40 ms. s. of Boston; from W. 433 ms. Watered by Taunton river. Pop. 5,336." The interesting point is that there is no other place listed with this exact spelling . . . there are plenty of Middleburghs, Middleburys, but Middleborough, Massachusetts appears to be an exclusive.

The initials p. t. stand for post town and indicate that there might be small villages or areas within the boundaries of this one town. The W. stands for the national capital . . . Washington, D.C.

John Hayward's *New England Gazetteer* published in 1839 also had a substantial sub-title . . . 'containing descriptions of all the states, counties and towns in New England: also descriptions of the principal mountains, rivers, lakes, capes, bays, harbors, islands and Fashionable Resorts within that territory. Alphabetically arranged.' These Gazetters of John Hayward, as well as others published, serve to furnish informative details regarding a place or location at that particular time. It is interesting to note the details as given in this book published eleven years earlier. Since Hayward's Gazetteer deals only with the six New England States, the individual entries are far more detailed. This is what they have to say about Middleborough, Massachusetts.

"Middleborough, Mass. Plymouth Co. This is the Indian Nemasket; formerly thickly populated by the people of that tribe, and governed by the noted sachem Tispacan. On the rocks, in this town, are the prints of naked hands and feet, supposed to be the work of the Indians. Here are numerous ponds, several kinds of fish, and large quantities of iron ore is found in the ponds. These ponds, of which the Assawamset and Lond Pond are the largest, empty into Taunton river, and produce an extensive water power."

"This town lies 34 miles S. by E. from Boston, 14 S.S.W. from Plymouth, and 10 S.E. from Taunton. Incorporated, 1660. Population, 1837, 5,005. This is probably the largest town in the state. It is 15 miles in length, and about 9 average breadth; it has several pleasant villages. There are 2 cotton mills, 2 forges, an air and cupola furnace, a nail factory, and manufacturers of leather, shovels, spades, forks, ploughs, wrought nails, chairs, cabinet ware, tacks, straw bonnets, and various other articles; total value, in one year, $200,000."

Then Mr. Hayward devoted a full paragraph to the finding of the land turtle with the several markings indicating the turtle's longevity.

In this same year, 1839, John W. Barber published a book entitled "Historical Collections, being a general collection of interesting facts, traditions, biographical sketches, anecdotes, etc. relating to the history and antiquities of every town in Massachusetts with geographical descriptions." Most of these early books borrowed liberally from each other . . . sometimes rewording the paragraph or paragraphs and at other times making a direct copy and usually without any reference to the source.

Barber in his account makes a few additional comments of interest in creating a 'picture' of old Middleborough. He adds: "Bog iron ore was once extensively used in this town, till it was discovered that there was an abundance of much purer ore to be found in the Assawamset pond. There are also some indications of anthracite coal. There are in the town 8 houses of worship, 4 Baptist, 3 Congregational and 1 Methodist. [all this in 1838]

"The village of Four Corners is the principal settlement of Middleborough and consists of about 50 dwelling-houses in the immediate vicinity of the Baptist Church and academy. This place is 15 miles from Plymouth, 20 from New Bedford, 11 from Taunton, 14 from Wareham and 34 from Boston. Population, 5,005. In 1837 there were 2 cotton mills, 2,384 spindles, 553,000 yards of cotton cloth were manufactured; value $39,710; males employed 21; females 67. There were 3 manufacturers of shovels, spades and forks; value of articles manufactured, $52,500; hands employed, 42; capital invested, $22,000; there were 2 forges, 1 air and cupola furnace, and 1 nail factory; 12,500 straw bonnets were manufactured, valued at $40,505. Value of tacks manufactured, $13,000; 15 males and 4 females were employed. Value of boards and lumber, $11,112; value of shingles, $5,616."

In 1853 there was published a book entitled "The Massachusetts Register for the Year 1853 containing a Business Directory of the state with a variety of useful information," compiled by George Adams. And again, there is direct repetition of some information and also there is new information. Town officers for Middleboro' . . . it is interesting to note the spelling change to the use of the apostrophe indicating that the word is not spelled out in full . . . are given as follows: Selectmen and Assessors . . . Ichabod Atwood, Asa T. Winsslow, Apollos Haskins, Jonathan Cobb, Otis Soule, Everett Robinson. Overseers of the Poor — Thomas Doggett, Ichabod F. Atwood, Benj. P. Wood. Clerk, Treasurer and Collector — Geo. Pickens and Constables were: Milton Alden, Joseph Clark."

The Plymouth County Business Directory lists these businesses.

Apothecaries — Shaw, J. B. & Co.
Auctioneers — Hinkley, Sylvanus
Bakers — Reckard and Wilbour
Blacksmiths — Lincoln, L. & Son; Littlejohn, Erasmus; Vaughan, Adoniram
Bonnet Manufacturers — Pickens, King & Co.
Boot and Shoe Manufacturers — Clark & Hooper; Eaton, Leonard & Co; Eddy & Leach in East Middleborough; Kingman, Calvin D.; Kingman, Hosea; Leonard, James A.; Leonard, Otis B. & C.; Perkins, Elijah; Sampson & King
Cabinet makers — Soule, George
Carpenters & Builders — Eaton, Sidney; Peirce, William S.
Clothing Stores — Fuller, C. & S. R.
Cotton Manufacturers — Nemasket Co. cloth — Job Pierce, agent; Pierce & Wood cloth
Daguerreotype Miniatures — Jenney, James
Dry Goods — Peirce, Peter H. & Co.; Vaughan, George
Furniture dealers — Soule, George
Grist Mills — Nemasket Co.
Insurance Agencies — Perkins, Noah C.
Iron Founders — Eddy, Wm. & Sons; Tinkham & Thompson
Livery Stables — Cole & Standish; Dean, Wm. L.; Washburn, George
Lumber dealers — Pierce, Samuel
Merchant Tailors — Fuller, C. & S. R.; Vaughan, George
Painters — Sparrow, Jacob G.
Physicians — Comstock, Thomas; Drake, E. W.; Gilman, Frank; King, George; Perkins, John; Robinson, M.; Snow, George W.
Planing Mills — Nemasket Co.
Public Houses — Dean, W. L.
Saddle, Trunk & Harness makers — Lazell, Thomas
Saw Mills — Benson & Smith; Cox, George; Nemasket Co.; Soule, Otis; Simson, Thomas; Thompson, Amasa
Shovel Mfrs. — Eddy, Wm. S. & Son; Washburn, Philander
Tack & Nail Mfrs. — Osborn & Mason
Tinsmiths & Stove Dealers — Deane, George H.
Watch Makers — Thatcher, L. P.; Tinkham, Roland
West India goods and groceries — Staples & Dunbar; Tinkham, Enoch
Wheelwrights and Carriage Builders — Peirce, Elisha; Shurtleff, Lathrop; Vaughan, William H.

## QUESTION BOX

Mrs. Nathan H. Bryant, Jr., of Holland, Michigan wishes to learn who were the parents of Zebulon Bryant, born in Middleborough, April 17, 1741. If anyone having the information will send it to the editor of the Antiquarian, she will see it is forwarded to Mrs. Bryant.

## THE FORT HILL SITE

William B. Taylor

### PART II

In an easterly direction lies the other half of this large site, known as the Fort Hill Bluff Site. At a sharp bend in the Taunton River appears a prominent table-top boulder at the river's edge. For many years it has been known as Sentinel Rock, and colonial records mention it in use as a platform by Indians of those days, when fishing the swirling water at its base. The river's bank rises precipitously behind it to a height of some 35 feet. Here is a commanding view of the surrounding low lands to the north. It was here that a comparatively small palisaded fort was built by Nemasket Indians in Contact days, as a defense against attack from their Indian enemies. The fort's existence is verified by memoranda from early times in the Bennett family reported as follows: "The Nemasket Indians and neighboring tribes built this Fort for their own protection. They had two doors to the Fort, one next to the river and one on the opposite side." (Weston 1906: 398 note 2)

On the basis of this information, and a statement handed down in the Dunham family from past generations that the fort stood on the hill above Sentinel Rock, excavation was undertaken in 1952. The Cohannet Chapter of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, after exploratory testing, uncovered four lines of post molds in the palisaded structure. It was found to have a rectangular shape of approximately 35 x 41 feet, with a protected opening in its walls of posts both in front and in back (Fig. 3). One important natural feature was a never-failing spring only a stone's throw from the fort, which would have contributed toward a successful defense of long duration. However, no significant artifacts were recovered from within the structure to show extended occupancy. A few post molds in an interior front corner of the fort suggest the possible existence of a lookout platform as a means of peering over the palisaded walls; or perhaps it was some kind of shelter for a few people. This was all that remained to tell what may have taken place within the stockade.

Outside the structure, casual excavating nearby was more successful. Here, evidence was exposed in the loam to indicate the possible presence of fort defenders in early colonial days. The finds consisted of 3 musket balls, a copper cutout arrow point, a steel knife blade, and various objects such as a glass mirror, kaolin pipe fragments, flat rolled copper pieces — probable remains from making of copper cutout points — and a small tubular glass bead, as reported by Karl Dodge (1953 - 81). Also recovered by surface hunting were 6 gun flints.

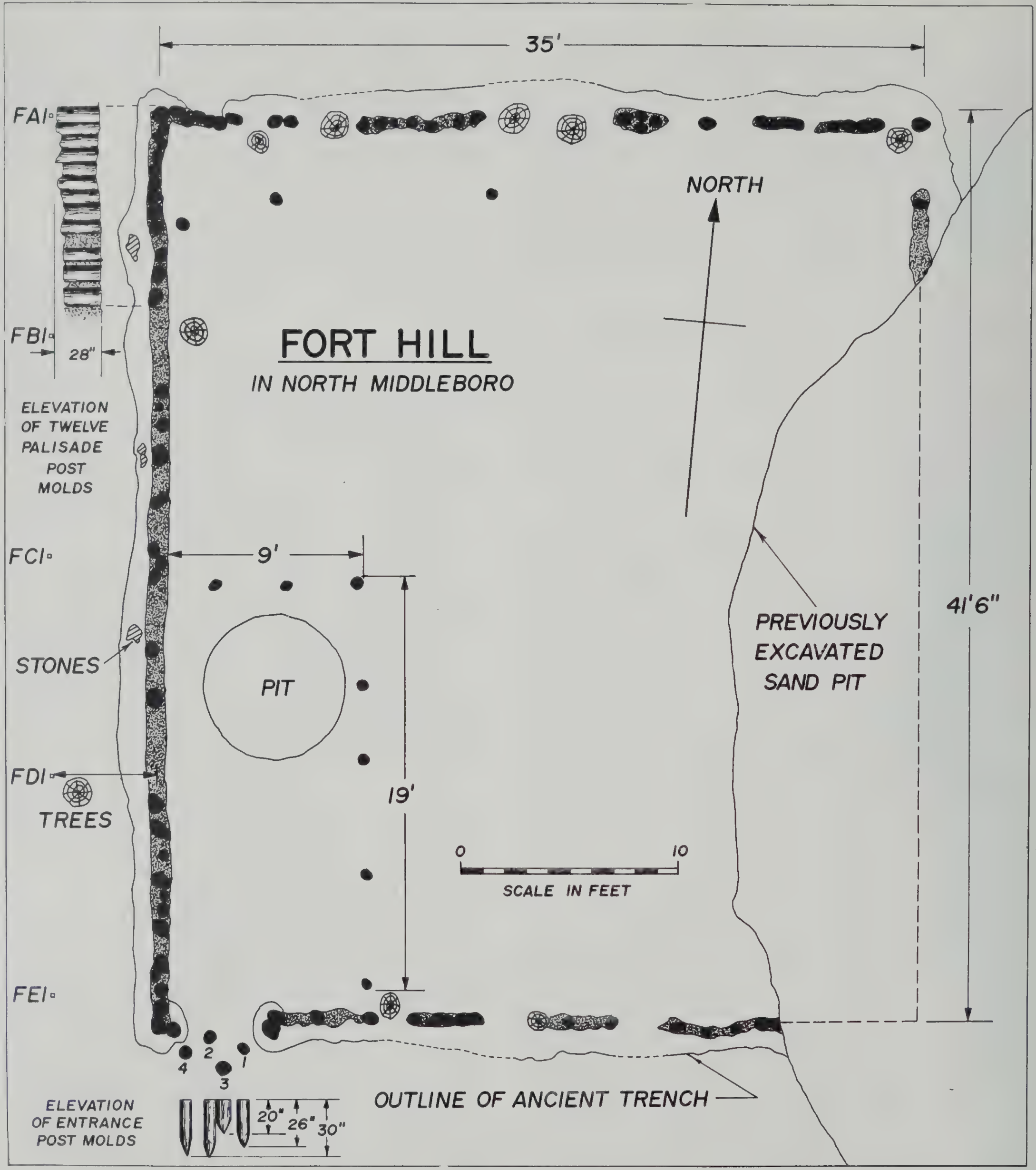
35'
FA1
FB1
28"
ELEVATION OF TWELVE PALISADE POST MOLDS
FC1
STONES
FD1
TREES
FE1
FORT HILL
IN NORTH MIDDLEBORO
NORTH
9'
PIT
19'
PREVIOUSLY EXCAVATED SAND PIT
41'6"
0
10
SCALE IN FEET
4
2
3
1
ELEVATION OF ENTRANCE POST MOLDS
20"
26"
30"
OUTLINE OF ANCIENT TRENCH

Figure 3

Plan of excavated features of the stockade, as revealed by Cohannet Chapter excavations in 1952. Courtesy of Bronson Museum, Attleboro, Massachusetts.

## DISCUSSION

The Fort Hill Bluff Site has always appealed to the writer because of its high elevation above the river, and because of the former existence there of a palisaded fort that gives it a mark of distinction. While it is true that remains of the fort are related only to the last, or Contact period, it is worthwhile to note, as a result of the subsequent bluff excavation, that the site had been occupied by people of every previous period except the Paleo-Indian. Quite obviously, this general approval of the location throughout the years was on account of its commanding view of the surrounding terrain, the nearby spring, and the Sentinel Rock fishing stand. This continuous use of the site has furnished our archaeological research with typological evidence that parallels similar culture sequences found at other excavated sites in the area, notably Titicut that lies about a quarter of a mile down stream. Much has been written and published in the Society Bulletin in the past about Titicut, with a radiocarbon date obtained there of 5,750 + 750 years ago.

However, perhaps that which is most striking about the site on the bluff is evidence there revealing the former presence of the fort. This is a unique feature seldom found, and it excites one's imagination as to what may have occurred that caused it to be constructed. Since it belonged to the protohistoric period, it was a product of local Indian engineering, built as a means of defense against attack by enemies. Its construction may have been incited by Iroquoian Mohawk raids — known to have reached this far into New England — as well as those of the coastal Narragansetts. Actual accounts of how it served in times of attack are lacking, except for one that may be worth relating. Derived from Thomas Weston's History of the Town of Middleboro, it recounts an early story that has come down in the Bennett family of an attack on the fort that was averted in an ingenious way, if the story can be believed as something more than fiction (398 note 2).

Remember that the fort had two entrances, one toward the river and one on the opposite side. The tale goes as follows:

One day they (Nemaskets) were surprised by a formidable force of Narragansett Indians with whom they were at war at the time. Unfortunately, there were only eight men in the Fort. The others were hunting and fishing. What, therefore, now to do they could not tell, but something must be done and that immediately. Therefore, every Indian bound on his blanket and arrows and took his bow and rushed out of the back door through the bushes and down the bank to the river. Then by the river, in the opposite direction from their enemies a small distance, then ascended the bank in sight of their enemy, then rushing in through the Fort and down the bank again, then up the bank and through the Fort as before. This round of deception they continued until the enemy, being surprised that the Fort consisted of so formidable a number, left the ground precipitately and retired, fearing an attack from the vast number in the Fort.

Archaeologically, what may relate to such defensive action are the copper cutout arrow points, musket balls and gun flints found outside the fort. From this evidence it may be that beside the bow-and-arrows of the Bennett account a flintlock gun or two, obtained from the English may have been present. Moreover, our bluff excavation that uncovered remains of a camp directly behind the fort, containing artifacts of Contact days, strongly suggests that here may have been the wigwams in which the defenders of the fort lived.

While evidence of the kind found in this report may never support more than hypothesis, it may serve to help fill in the void that separates the present from the past, by picturing for us something about the struggle for existence of our Indian neighbors of early Historic times. (Taylor 1976: 10)

Since the original report by Karl Dodge in 1953 had been a preliminary account, it was suggested that a more detailed description of the Fort would be of interest to local readers. Dr. Maurice Robbins located the old records and offered the following comments and interpretation of the excavation:

"The dark line which represents the old line posts is shown (Fig. 3). Within it we were able to discern a number of individual posts as indicated, the rest of the line was simply black earth and charcoal. The ancient trench outline was apparently a ditch dug to receive the posts. We profiled only a portion of the west side of the fort before we were obliged to stop work on order of the new owner. This was sufficient to show that the ends of the large posts were not pointed and must have been set against the back edge of the trench which was then refilled, probably leaving an embankment on the outside of the walls. The posts shown in the doorway were pointed and evidently driven. There are many gaps in the line of the stockade. These were probably made by trees or other natural disturbance. The earth had been previously removed in the area indicated, thus nearly obliterating the east wall of the stockade.

It seems to me that there is a good possibility that the stockade was burned, thus leaving the dark line of charcoal to mark the walls. The gaps may have been portions that did not burn and were later pulled down and removed; this eliminated the trench in that area and left no trace of the posts. This is, of course, merely a guess. Possibly the interior posts represent a structure along the inside walls, a sort of narrow platform from which one could shoot at anyone outside the wall. The rectangular outline may be that of a shelter, but may also be simply a firing platform. The large pit beneath this structure was about 6½ ft. in diameter and about 4 ft. deep at the center. In addition to deer bones, clam, oyster, and quahog shells mentioned in the preliminary report, there were a number of bones in the pit from the domesticated pig and possibly a sheep."

At the bottom of the pit 40 or 50 silver pins were discovered. These were laid out in a row, as if pinned to a sheet of cardboard that had long disintegrated. These pins were ¾ inches in length with a round head, about 1/16 inches in diameter.

The datum point was measured from the center span of Pratt's Bridge, some 1200 feet downstream. In 1956 a new bridge was erected on the same spot, thus the original measurements are no longer precise. The fort was approximately 35 feet above the river and located atop a high bank, which falls steeply down to the Taunton River below. This position offered an excellent view both upstream and downstream for approximately one half mile in each direction. From this vantage point the fort was easily defended from any attack from the river.

One final note of interest concerns the sand pit which destroyed the east stockade wall. The Pratt family, who originally owned this land, once farmed the fields surrounding the fort. During gravel removing operations, a stone pipe with a sheet copper stem was found. The dark green bowl of this pipe was almost square and had a short stem attached, which was extended by a rolled tube of copper. I was shown this rare find almost 30 years ago; it is now in the collection of the R. S. Peabody Foundation in Andover. Although two other sandpits are near the fort, it seems likely that the one adjoining the stockade held the pipe, since several other contact artifacts were excavated within the structure.

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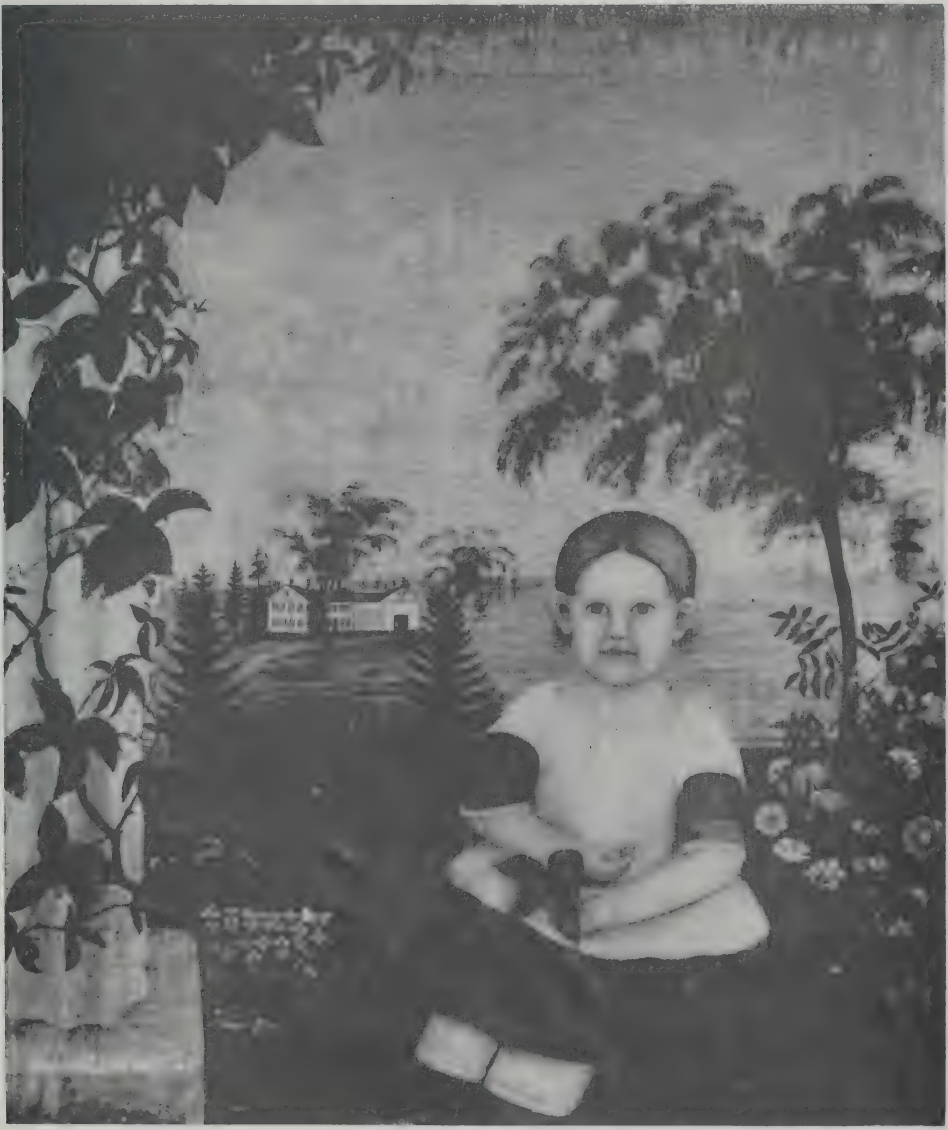

*Courtesy of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Collection, Williamsburg, Virginia.*

**ARABELLA SPARROW**
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## ARABELLA SPARROW SOUTHWORTH

The photograph on the front cover is a reproduction of a beautiful painting formerly owned by a Middleboro resident, but now included in the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Collection at Williamsburg, Virginia.

Arabella Sparrow had two sisters and two brothers living in Middleboro: J. Augustine Sparrow, Harry P. Sparrow, Helen Sparrow Barrows, and Anna Sparrow Wood, whose daughter, Helen Wood Ashley, still resides in Middleboro and is the original owner of the painting.

The portrait is attributed to the artist David Ryder, although almost no information can be found about him except that he may have lived in Rochester, Massachusetts. The following description of the painting is given in the records of the Art Collection:

> "Oil painting of charming little brown haired, round faced, blue-eyed girl seated full length in landscape setting. She wears a blue dress with short sleeves and lace at edges, and a white pinafore with lace trimming and long white pantelletes and black shoes. Her hair is short and wispy and parted in center. She is seated in a grassy garden in the lower right hand corner of painting. A tall fluted white marble column on a square base fills the left side of painting. It is covered with vines like Virginia creeper. Beside and behind the girl are various red and white flowers, lilies, and strawberries. She holds large strawberries in her lap. Behind her and to her left are pink flowers and vines and a tall thin tree. In mid-distance is a stone wall and two symmetrical pine trees in front of it. On the far side are two men herding cows in a pasture. A farm house is in the mid-distance to the left. The horizon line is below the center of the painting and the little girls' head looms above the horizon. The farm house is white, two storied with four chimneys. A barn and arched lattice painted white. The sky is blue."

Arabella Sparrow was the daughter of Jacob G. and Lois Macomber Sparrow, and was born in Middleboro, Massachusetts, in 1844/5. In her younger years she was known in the Middleboro area as a vocalist. She married Rodney E. Southworth and continued to live in Middleboro, where her husband owned and operated a carriage painting shop on Wareham Street.

A label attached to the back of the portrait and written by Mrs. Southworth reads:

> *"Portrait of Arabella 'Lois' Sparrow Southworth at three years of age. Painted by Mr. David Ryder of Rochester, Massachusetts. My father's old home. I was sitting in the front room on a cricket with strawberries in my hand to keep me quiet at the Sparrow home on Wareham Street. 1848"*

If, as stated by Mrs. Southworth on the label, she was sitting in the front room of her home, it is obvious the artist used a custom common at that time of painting the subject from life and filling in the background later from his own imagination.

Mrs. Southworth died in the home on Wareham Street on January 23, 1928, at the age of eighty-three years.

## GENEALOGY OF THE BARROWS FAMILY

The following genealogy is printed by courtesy of Robert S. Barrows of Rochester, New York. Mr. Barrows has done extensive research on the Barrows family and is at present at work on a book about descendants of his great grandfather, Freeman Barrows, who was born in Middleboro in 1813.

From Fuller Genealogy, Vol. 4

P. 94. Thomas Fuller 1765 -, m. 1793 Mary (Polly) Fuller He was a physician in Cooperstown, N. Y. Fourth child was Catherine.

Catherine, 1801-1887 or 1888, m. Rev. E. S. Barrows, 1790-1847. Lived in Pompey, Cazenovia. Utica, and Cooperstown, N. Y. Children:

1. Joseph Lyman Barrows b. 1825-1895. m. 1852 Caroline Jerome, (Janesville, Wis.)
2. Mary Fuller Barrows b. 1827- m. 1855 Paul Fennimore Cooper (Albany, N. Y.)
3. E. Storrs Barrows 1833-1906 m. 1857 Anna Doolittle (res. Denver) m. 1872 Mary Bascom
4. Eliza Morehouse Barrows 1836-1916. m. 1858 Charles Smith (res. Cooperstown)
5. Catherine Fuller Barrows 1838-1865
6. Cornelia Pomeroy 1841 m. 1869 Henry Walker (res. Cooperstown)

The Rev. Eleazer Storrs Barrows was the son of Polly (Hall) (1976-1846) and Eleaser Barrows 1763-1847 m. 1789

This Eleazer was the son of Elizabeth (Turner) - - - - - - - - - and Thomas Barrows 1776-1802. m. 1752, of Mansfield, Conn.

Taunton, Mass. V.R.

Nancy Augusta Barrows, b. 7 March 1844, dau. Rev. Elijah W. and Louise.

Harriet Amanda Barrows, bp. 20 Aug. 1837, dau. of the Rev. Barrows.

Helen Amelia "Second" Barrows, bp. 9 Dec. 1838, dau of the Rev. Barrows.

Middleboro, Mass. V.R.

Elijah W. Barrows & Ariedna (Ariadne) V. Thompson, m. 28, Dec. 1852.

## TWIGS AND BRANCHES

We regret there is no "Twigs and Branches" in this issue of the Antiquarian due to the fact that Mrs. Charles Town-Tom Fahey presented concrete plans for such a fund. With his send, author of this feature, has been in the hospital with a broken hip. We extend to her our sincere sympathy and hope that "Twigs and Branches" will appear as usual in the next issue of the Antiquarian.

MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleboro, Mass.
VOLUME XVIII 1978 Number 4

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|---|---|
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## IN MEMORIAM

The Middleborough Historical Association suffered a grievous loss in the sudden death of Thomas Fahey, who was killed in a crash of his own plane near the Taunton Airport. Mr. Fahey was vice-president of the Association and was looking forward to serving as president during 1978 and 1979.

Filled with boundless energy and enthusiasm, Mr. Fahey had exciting plans for the future of the Association and the Historical Museum. Just a week before his death in November he had been wholly responsible for a two-night presentation of the musical *South Pacific*, given in the Middleboro High School auditorium by the Little Theatre Group of Taunton, of which Mr. Fahey was a member. This was to be the initial effort toward establishing a foundation or endowment fund for the benefit of the Middleborough Historical Museum. The project was a success and the endowment fund was established with $1,000, proceeds of the musical. Because it was entirely due to Mr. Fahey's far-sighted vision that the Endowment Fund became a reality, the Fund will always serve as a memorial to his deep interest in and dedicated efforts for the welfare and betterment of the Middleborough Historical Association.

## THE MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL MUSEUM ENDOWMENT FUND

Ever since the Museum was established in 1960, it has existed on a "hand to mouth" basis, with never a backlog of funds. Those concerned with the welfare of the Historical Museum knew it could not continue to operate in this manner. Auctions and flea markets were held annually, but the proceeds were almost immediately absorbed in needed repairs and regular expenses. Some sort of a permanent fund was dreamed and talked about, but nothing was done until the late Fahey presented concrete plans for such a fund. With his usual vision and knowledge and ability to get things done, he drew up specifications for a fund and proceeded to engage the Little Theatre Group of Taunton to put on performances of "South Pacific," the proceeds of which would be used to establish an Endowment Fund.

Since the Fund has become a reality, gifts have been received of $200, $100 and several smaller sums to add to the $1,000 realized from "South Pacific."

The purpose of the Fund is "to be a means of permanent income to secure continued financial care of the needs of the Middleborough Historical Museum." It is hoped that the fund will receive other gifts, which of course are tax deductible, and that in making their wills, members and friends will remember the Museum and designate sums of money to be given to the Middleborough Historical Museum Endowment Fund.

## THE FORT HILL SITE

William B. Taylor

Part 3

After the fort excavation had been completed, the excavators and others believed that there might have existed a camp close by, where the people may have lived, the fort being used only as a place to retreat to in the event of an attack. With this thought in mind, during the following year and for six succeeding years, William H. Taylor and the writer, with the help of other Society members, carried on further excavations in back of the fort. Here seemed to be the most likely living area, as the land in front of the fort fell off sharply to the river below, while that to the rear was relatively level, with a gentle slope away from the structure.

At first a 4 foot wide trench was dug skirting a large growth of trees, which defied a less obstructed plan of operation. Eventually an area 200 x 300 feet was excavated, commencing at the rear of the fort and extending some distance up stream. Soil depths varied somewhat through the dig due to natural surface erosion. None the less, four distinct periods of occupation have been defined by the types of recovered projectile points — depth measurements were not recorded — when compared to similar types at other well stratified sites. This comparison provides a culture sequence that is generally accepted as a standard to be expected at sites being excavated. Here at Fort Hill — the earliest occupation of the site — Early Archaic and Middle Archaic may be identified by Bifurcated, and Corner-removed, #5, #8, and #9 points. Following this comes the next period — Late Archaic — with Corner-removed #7, Tapered Stem, Eared, Small Stemfi and Small Triangular #4 points. The third period, Ceramic-Woodland, is represented by Large Triangular, Small Triangular #5, Corner-notched, and Small Stem points. Finally, the fourth period, Contact (Historic), may be identified by such recovered items as copper arrow points, musket balls, gun flints (probably related to the Indian occupation at the time of the fort), fragmented kaolin pipes, and the bowl of a pewter spoon that appeared with the handle broken off.

Along with these objects, other implements were uncovered, which likewise lacked definite recorded depths at which they were found. They consist of a wing atlatl weight preform with its drilling only just started, a clumsy plummet, Celt, Plain gouge, 2 Sinew-stones, scrapers, drills, knives, a pestle, and Hammerstones. Some of these, along with representative projectile points from the site —typologically arranged, in the case of the points, as to the respective cultures to which they belong — are in the following photos.

The various stages of cultural development by the Indians of New England are separated into four major divisions: Paleo, Archaic, Ceramic-Woodland and Historic. Both the Archaic and woodland have three phases — Early, Middle and Late. The dates corresponding with each are as follows:

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| *Period* | *Time Range* |
|---|---|
| Paleo Indian | 10,000 - 7500 B.C. |
| Early Archaic | 7,500 - 6,000 B.C. |
| Middle Archaic | 6,000 - 3,000 B.C. |
| Late Archaic | 3,000 - 500 B.C. |
| Early Woodland | 500 B.C. - 1 A.D. |
| Middle Woodland | 1 A.D. - 800 A.D. |
| Late Woodland | 800 - 1500 A.D. |
| Historic (Contact) | 1500 - 1700 + A.D. |

The above dates are merely guidelines for the New England area. Transitional phases from one period to the next did not always start or end at every site simultaneously and changes occurred more rapidly between larger tribes than some of the smaller ones (Nemasket) that lived locally.

### *Paleo-Indian Period*

The Paleo Indians were nomadic hunters who followed the herds of mammoths, mastadon and caribou which ranged throughout the area. Armed with only spears and clubs man followed these giant animals over vast areas, traveling in small hunter groups of 30 or more. Due to his nomadic way of life, the Paleo-Indian is not considered a native of any one region. The two largest known Massachusetts sites (Bull Brook in Ipswich and Wapanucket No. 8 in Middleboro) seem to confirm this way of life, as concentration of artifacts is confined to small areas that may have been only seasonal stop-off sites. Their fluted points were made of exotic flint and chert material of which there is no known local source. Evidence indicates the material came from quarries in New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio and may indicate the direction in which these early hunters entered New England. Although no Paleo artifacts have appeared at Fort Hill to date, it seems only reasonable to assume that early man passed through here on his way to the north eastern shore of Lake Assawampsett.

### *Early-Archaic Period*

After starting with a frozen tundra era followed by the spruce-lichen ground cover of Paleo times, the Early Archaic Period became dominated by mixed pine and hardwood forests. Sometime between 8,000 and 10,000 years ago the large Ice Age animals became extinct and New England Indians turned to hunting smaller game such as deer, seals, large beaver, walrus, bear, moose, musk-ox, etc. The main artifact belonging to the Early Archaic Period is a point with a bifurcated base. Here at Fort Hill 18 bifurcated points have been recovered in recent years. Moreover the Titicut area has yielded more points of this type than any other New England site. This fact raises some interesting speculation. (see Fig. 4)

It has been suggested that these distinctive projectiles were used for harpooning seal. In recent years seal have been noted in the Taunton River as far upstream as Dighton. With a higher water table these acquatic mammals, 8,000 years ago, might have frequented the Titicut area and as far upstream as Lake Nippenicket and Assawampsett. The chief attraction for seal at that time could well have been what is present today; the anuual run of alewives, commonly known as herring. Also, such a run of fish to their spawning grounds might have included salmon, a fish that is known to be followed by seal, often as far as hundreds of miles inland in other parts of the world (Taylor 1976:36-41).

### *The Middle Archaic Period*

With a continuing warming trend, forests soon changed to a mixed pine-oak, followed by an oak-hemlock tree cover. As oak forests expanded, deer and wild turkey migrated northward and became an important part of Indian diet. Modern seasonal migration patterns of birds and fish began during this period. Campsites became larger, with a strong preference for location near rivers, lakes and swamps. (Fetchko, Grimes & Phippen 1975:10)

Projectile points of this intermediate period were Corner-Removed No. 5 (Neville point), followed by Corner-Removed No. 8 and 9 (Stark points). (See Fig. No. 4.)

### *Late Archaic Period*

During this period oak-hickory forests supported large herds of deer, plus turkey and bear. Wild natural foods such as nuts, berries and edible roots were gathered and eaten. Although hunting still was the number one food supplier, more and more ways of using their natural resources were being discovered. Coastal and shoreline food supplies were used widely, as evidenced by large shell middens. Campsites became semi-permanent as a reliance upon abundant resources became established. Toward the middle of this period, man's first industry was started — the manufacture of soapstone bowls. (See Fig. 5, 6 and 7.)

The movements of these Late Archaic Indians developed cyclical patterns. In winter the Indians would be scattered about inland hunting areas in small family groups. When spring came, bringing the annual run of fish, they gathered in large numbers at favorite fishing sites along the rivers (Titicut). Smoking fish was the only known way of preserving this food, which would last well into the summer. (Robbins 1969:8.)

An elaborate mortuary ceremonialism appeared in New England as migrants from the middle Atlantic states brought new types of points and ideas to our region. Cremation burials have appeared at Titicut (Seaver Farm - Bridgewater), that produced large broad ceremonial blades as well as arrow points, knives, drills, axes, celts, pestles, gouges, plummets and other implements common to this period. See Fig. 8, 9, and 10. Many of these were "killed" or burned with the body as part of the burial ceremony. Red ocher, symbolizing blood, is also present in many of these graves.

*— to be continued —*

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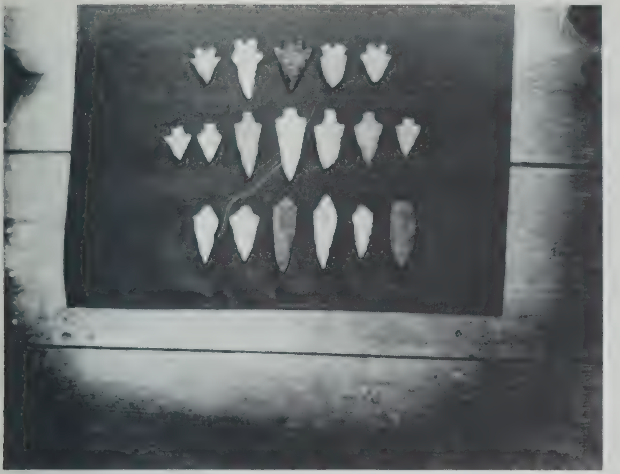


Figure 4

Top row shows 5 Bifurcated points from Early Archaic period. Second row has 7 Corner-Removed No. 5 points from Middle Archaic period. Third row has 1 Corner-Removed No. 2 (Early Archaic) and 5 Corner-Removed No. 8 & 9 points from Middle Archaic period.

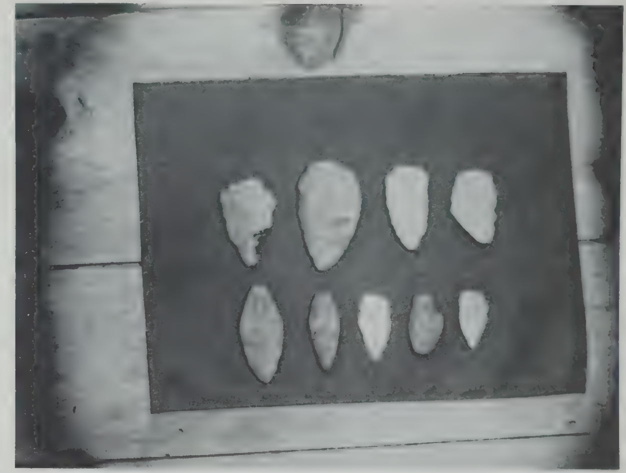


Figure 5

Leaf, Stem and Stemless knives from Early Archaic thru Ceramic-Woodland culture periods.

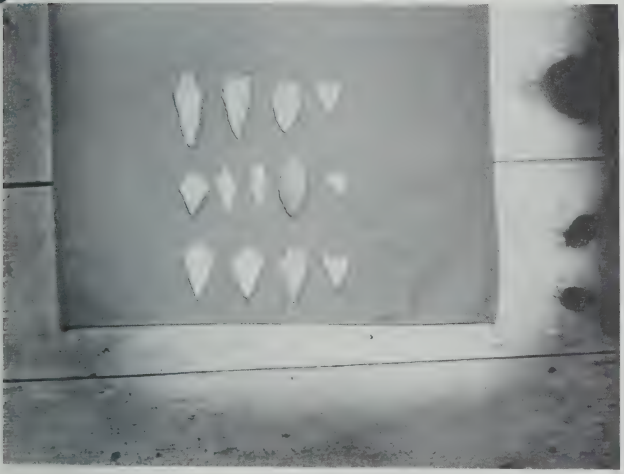


Figure 6

A group of Late Archaic points showing examples of Small Triangular No. 4, Small Stem, Corner-Removed No. 7, Tapered Stem and Eared No. 4.

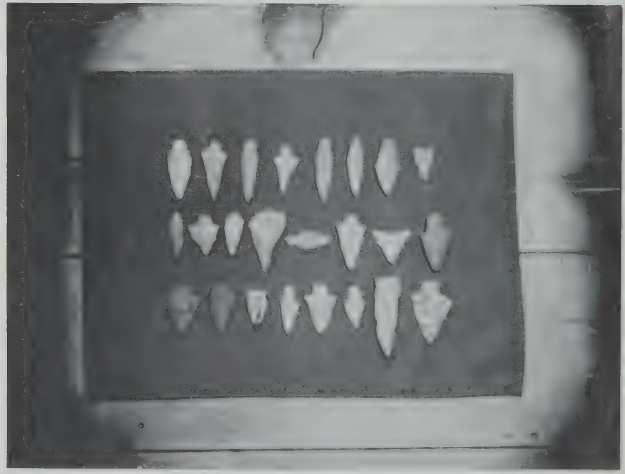


Figure 7

24 fine points and misc. items from Early Archaic thru Woodland periods. In center is large Expanded drill and pendant in shape of an alewife.

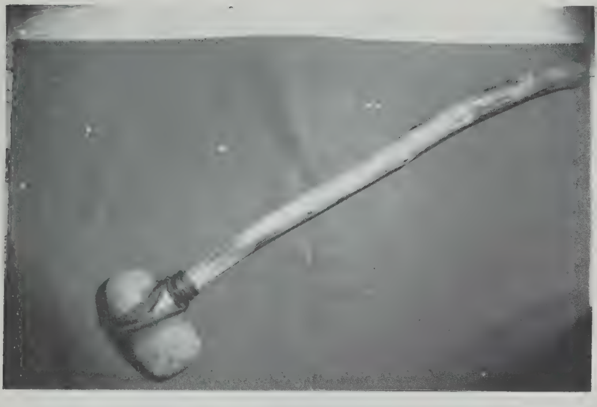


Figure 8

Full-grooved axe from Late Archaic period. Axe has been re-hafted using white ash handle and rawhide lacing.

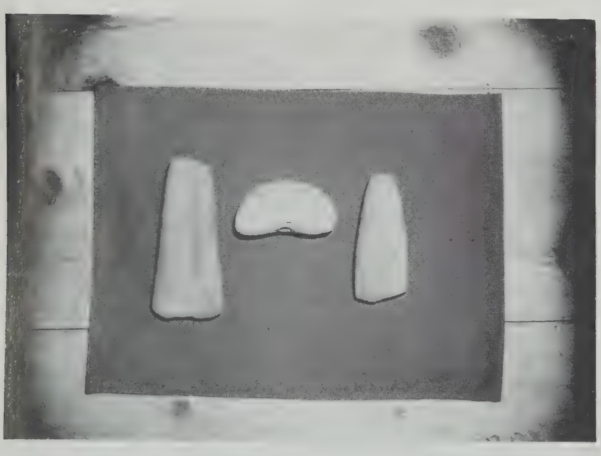


Figure 9

Plain gouge, Celt and Wing Atlatl Weight preform (center) from Late Archaic period. Drilling has only just started on Atlatl Weight and shows start of perforation by stick-and-sand abrasion.

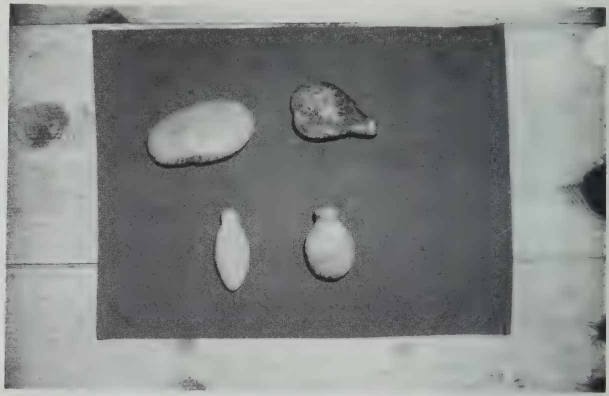


Figure 10

At top are 2 Sinewstones from Woodland period. Series of narrow grooves on the edge of both pieces are worn smooth by rubbing in preparation for using sinews for bowstrings. Bottom shows 2 Classic plummets (fishline sinkers) from Early Archaic period.

## INTERESTING DISCOVERIES AT THE MUSEUM

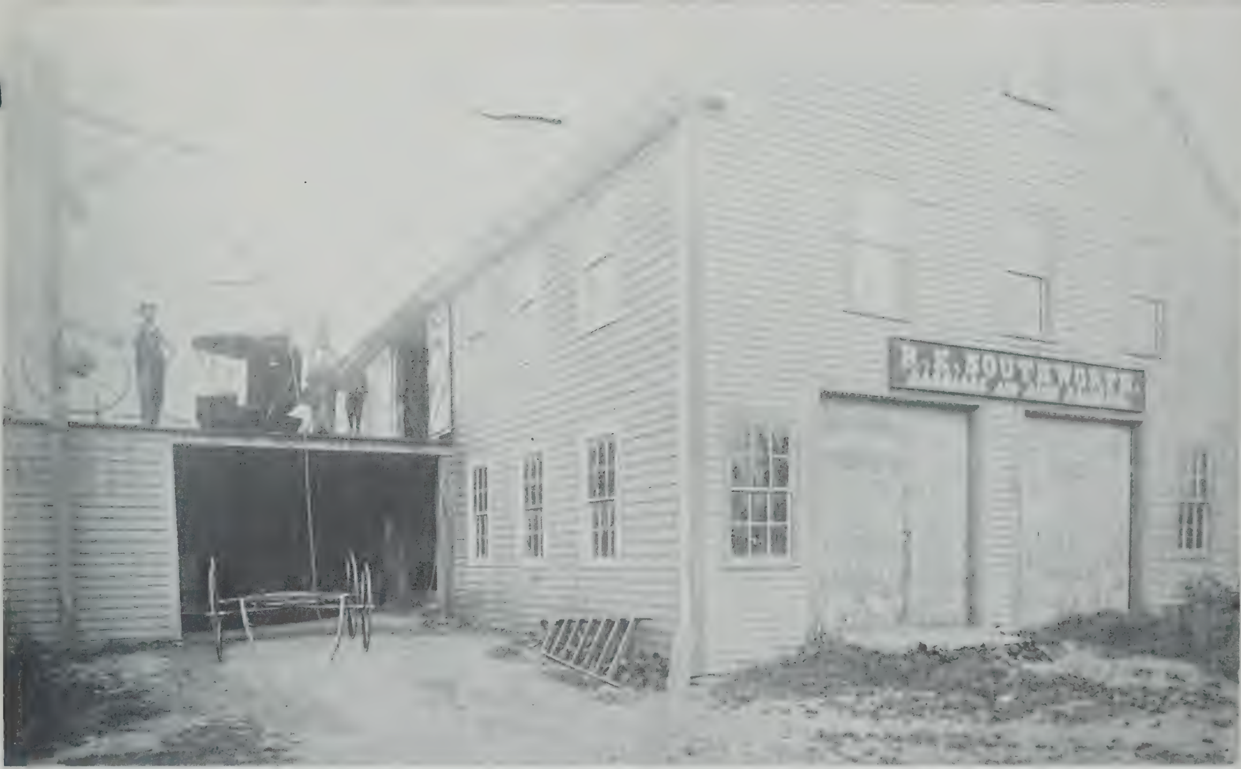
The Museum contains much beautiful handwork of long ago — samplers made in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, hand knitted lace, quilts and many other fine articles. Last August Mrs. Marion Channing of Marion, Massachusetts, an expert on weaving and handmade laces, examined the lace exhibited at the Museum and discovered three unusually beautiful pieces. The most exquisite is a lace scarf three yards long, embroidered with leaves and roses. The leaves and petals of the flowers are attached to the net in such a way that they are free-standing.

The second piece is a lovely handkerchief with elaborate corners and edging of handmade lace and the name "Louise" so finely embroidered it is almost invisible.

The third item is a fan of handmade lace, so fragile and beautiful that it is to be framed to preserve it.

In looking over some old Middleboro Gazettes, the following item caught the eye, since this quilt is now in the Middleborough Historical Museum:

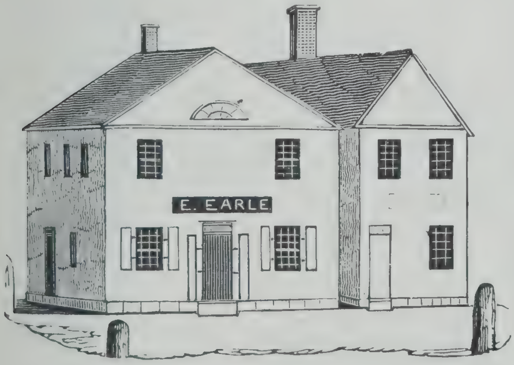
"Middleboro Gazette, February 19, 1926. Walter K. Allen, custodian of the Central Baptist Church, while inspecting wires in connection with the organ, ran across a cardboard box containing a quilt with squares sewed by members of the Sewing Society connected with the church and presented Mr. and Mrs. William Hubbard in 1848. Rev. and Mrs. Hubbard joined the church in 1839, Mr. Hubbard being a retired clergyman. The quilt eventually came into the possession of Mrs. Allan Thatcher, and later it was turned over to Mrs. Carrie W. Holmes, a member of the Sewing Circle." Two names appeared on the quilt who were living at that time: Mrs. Bradford G. Harlow and Mrs. N. H. Sylvester. Other names are recognized as those of well-known Middleboro residents of that time.



The above photograph is one taken on June 20, 1899, of the Rodney E. Southworth carriage and sign painting shop. Mr. Southworth was the husband of Arabella Sparrow, shown on the cover of this issue of the Antiquarian. The photograph was given to the Middleborough Historical Museum by the Southworth's niece, Mrs. Helen Wood Ashley.

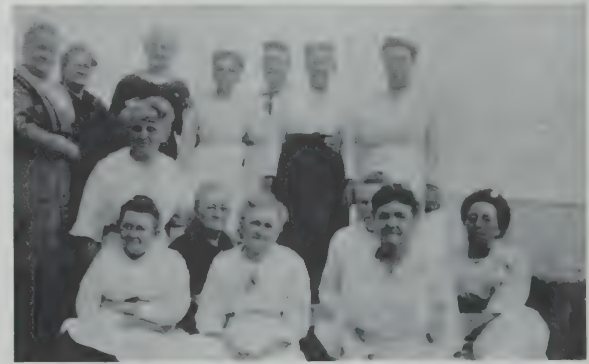
The property was sold in 1912 to John G. Howes, who converted the shop into a garage. It is now owned by the Maxim Motor Company.

◆



The building shown above was erected in 1831 to house the dry goods store of Major Ethan Earle. It stood on North Main Street near the corner of North Main and Center Streets, adjacent to the old Nemasket House. Major Earle specialized in millinery and is said to have also utilized as a millinery shop the small building that stood next to the P. H. Peirce Grocery Store at the corner of North Main and Jackson Streets. Major Earle married a daughter of Major Levi Peirce and built the handsome residence on North Main Street remembered by the present generation as the Robinson homestead. Sold to Lawyer Everett Robinson in the early 1800's, the house was torn down a few years ago to make way for the Professional Building that now occupies the site.

Before it was demolished at the turn of the century, the small building sketched above was used as a restaurant owned by E. M. Barden.



This group picture came from Mrs. Robert Atwood of Brockton through the courtesy of Mrs. Ernest Pratt. Mrs. Atwood hopes some of the ladies in the picture may be identified. It is thought to be a gathering of Middleboro ladies, possibly at an outing at Lake Assawampsett. Any suggestion will be welcomed.

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## GIVEN BACK TO THE INDIANS

by Edward W. Toole

of Bridgewater, Massachusetts

History has not told us, but a small part of Bridgewater was at one time returned to Indian title. There is no doubt of this. We may consult "The Acts and Resolves of the Province of Massachusetts Bay Volume Ten (page 464, chapter 88, Passed June 19, 1725).

Not much was returned; and it was done as a rectification of boundaries, instead of as a gift. The return was a half-century after the purchase concerned.

In 1645, as is well-known, the settlers of Duxbury were granted a tract of land, sixty-four square miles, to be exact, four miles every way from their center; and in the winter of 1649-50 three representatives of the Duxbury townsmen — Myles Standish, Samuel Nash, and Constant Southworth, purchased one of the largest areas sold by the Indians — fourteen miles square; one hundred ninety-six square miles.

The purchase was, however, from Massasoit, the Wampanoag Sachem. Within a month, four Massachusetts Indians protested the purchase at the motion of Nahauton, the son of Jumpum. Jumpum, as he is mentioned (I believe here only) may have been a local man. Nahauton is better known, and was quite useful to the White Men of Massachusetts Bay Colony as an interpreter and otherwise. His family is associated with the praying town of Ponkapog, (near Stoughton, and not yet extinct.)

The New Plymouth General Court did not pay much attention to the protest at the time, but in the year 1686, the township (but not its full extent) was bought of Charles Josiah (Wampatuck), the Massachusetts Sachem at the time, for ten pounds and one hundred acres of land. As for these hundred acres, Nahum Mitchell, the historian of Bridgewater, says they were later purchased by White people. It appears that he is right, altho it cannot seemingly be verified from the Bridgewater records.

In between, in 1668, the Town of Bridgewater petitioned for enlargement, which was granted by the Colony; and as a partial result, purchased lands at Titicut, north of the river, of one Pomponohoo, alias Peter, a local Sachem. Like the deed from Massasoit, the original of this deed is not now known, but we have the text; also the receipt. We have covered the purchase from Pomponohoo in another place; and our account, with necessary correction, may come later.

On June 9, 1664, the Sachem Wampatuck and his councillor, Wuttanamatuck granted lands to the praying Town of Titicut (properly Kehtehticut). John Eliot and others had been busy here; and conversion seems to have begun before the sale of Bridgewater.

There is a tablet to the memory of Wuttanumattuck in the replica of the Pilgrim trading post at Aptuxcet (Bourne) erected under the impression that he was a ruler at Mashpee.

The so-called "Tetaquat Purchase" of Bridgewater is of special interest. It was located on the north side of the river. It was made November 20, 1672 O.S. but it was some time before it was paid for. This was not all the fault of the Bridgewater English, who were intending to pay when King Philip's War came upon the scene. The price was "sixteen pounds, viz. six pounds of current money of New England, which means, we suppose, Pine Tree shillings with the date 1652, and ten pounds in good merchantable corn.

The reservations were "excepting those lands expressed as follows, viz. one hundred acres of land lying up the river to the eastward of a small brook, given to an Indian called Charles, my brother-in-law; and a certain parcel of land lying against the wear, and bounded by the landing place, running to the head of my field, containing ten acres at the utmost."

Judge Mitchell, 1897 edition, page 19, says:

The two reserved lots in the above grant were afterwards purchased by individuals in the town" In his earliest history, he tells the names of the supposed purchasers of one. Imagine my surprise, however, to learn that the purchase refered to was not in the Tetaquat Purchase at all.

In 1685 the "Tetaquat Purchase" was finally laid out. Thanks to the interest of Williams Latham, one of the best historians of Bridgewater, we have very good map or plan of the Purchase. In his "Historical Approach to Titticut" by Dr. Maurice Robbins, now the State Archaeologist, the writer remarks that in some way the reservations had been acquired by White Men, because they do not appear upon the map. He hazards the supposition that Charles might have joined the hostiles; and he and his Sachem lost their land rights in that way.

It is true, however, that the Massachusetts Indians, of whom this praying town of Titicut was a part, were quite loyal to the English; and Wannoo, a Titicut Indian, was on the Jury that judged the murderers of John Sassamon at the beginning of the War. The fort at Titicut, on the south side of the River, was doubtfully intended for use in fighting the Wampanoag and Narragansets in that War. In the records of the United Colonies there is mentioned a sum of one hundred pounds owed to Christian Indians of Plymouth Colony for their so far unpaid services in that war; unfortunately without names. Also, if Freeman, one of the best Old Colony historians, is correct, it was Charles (Pompmunit) who was born in Ashimuit in the present town of Mashpee, who was responsible for negotiating with the Sauconet Indians of Little Compton, whose joining the forces of the Old Colony contributed to the victory of the English.

The following excerpts from the Court Records (Plymouth Colony Records vol. 7, p. 230) year 1677, which is after the War:

"This Court gives libertie to John Wing Sen. of Yarmouth to exchange a pcell of land with an Indian named Pumpmunit whose land is a pcell of land belonging to the sd John Winge, lying at or about Satucket (the one on Cape Cod) for a parcell of land lying and being by the river Cahteeticutt alias Teticutt River."

This makes his title good after the War. The John King referred to was accused of damaging several Indians on Cape Cod in 1674, by appropriating their, or their wives' lands with damages at 50 pounds, but the case was non-suited. We do not censure Pompmunet for rejecting the bargain. We hear no more about it.

The fact remains that the authorities of the Tetaquat Reservation propriety never acknowledged the existence of any Indian reservation north of the river; altho they were willing to negotiate the matter (See History Highlights, Bridgewater, Mass., page 29 for an account) the effect to the Indians was the same. Their land rights were unacknowledged, altho they continued to live here. It is true that Charles Pompmunit (who we should have called Rev. Mr. Pompmunit, for he was a local minister), did not go to Barnstable to the hearing. He must have been an old man. In another place, if desired, the writer may trace both reservations. At this date it is not easy to do well; but no other historian has done it at all.

Now for the petition leading to the restoration of some of the lands:

"A petition of Benjamin Wannoe in behalf of himself and the Indians of Ketticut, showing that the Bounds of their Plantation towards Taunton and Middleboro have been run and settled to the mutual satisfaction of all parties, but the Inhabitants of Bridgewater disagree with the petitioners on the boundary on that side. And, praying that a committee be appointed to settle the said line and that the petitioner, Wannoe, may be impowered to sell some part of his lands in the plantation in order to discharge some debts contracted by him in lawsuits.

In Council read and ordered that the prayer of this petition be so far granted as that Sam. Thaxter, Esq. with such as the honourable House of Representatives shall appoint be a committee to run the bounds between the Indian plantation of Kitticutt and the Towne of Bridgewater.

In the House of Representatives Read and Concurred and ordered that John Quincy and Jacob Thompson, Esq. be joined in the affair and that the Town of Bridgewater have seasonable notice given them thereof

Consented to William Dummer"

We are remarking that Elizabeth Echee, whose will we have seen, was one of those who set the bounds between Titicut and the White people of Middleboro.

Samuel Thaxter, Esquire, from the Committee gave in the following report:

"Whereas the General Court at their session in May last past, upon the petition of Benjamin Wannoe on behalf of himself and the other proprietors of lands at Tetticut on the north side of the said river, appointed us, the subscribers to be a committee to run the line between the land of the said Indians and the towne of Bridgewater:

Pursuant to the said orders, having notified the town of Bridgewater and the said Indian proprietors, met at Bridgewater the seventh currant & on the eighth day went to Tetticut River where the Indian proprietors met us & after some debate about the quantity of lands which the Indians claimed, the said Indians and the Committee of Bridgewater mutually agreed that the said Indians should have one hundred acres on that spot where the Indians had improved from time to time.

"We accordingly run the lines of the said hundred acres and the Town of Bridgewater as follows: viz. we began at Tetticut River at the mouth of a small brook, and run a north line nintey-two rods to the northwest corner of Samuel Keith's land, being a large black oak. And thence we ran a line South sixty degrees westerly about two hundred and thirty rods to a Stake and heap of stones; and from thence a south line forty-two rods to the brook called the Iron Work Brook; th being an Apple Tree in this last range near the said brook.

The above mentioned lines were run by the needle and are described on the other side of this sheet.

Signed Samuel Thaxter
John Quincy
Jacob Thomson

Sept. 9th 1724 At the time of making the within mentioned agreement and settling the line between the Indians & Bridgewater, the Committee Reserved the Privilege of Purchasing of any of the said hundred acres that shall be put to sale hereafter by the said Indians, provided they give as much as others will.

Signed as before
Ordered that this report be accepted.
Passed November (1725)

In looking for the above in the records of the Town of Bridgewater, I had no luck finding a record of the boundary; but the provision of purchasing any land offered for sale by the Indians I did find.

We are told that by 1742 all the lands had been sold. The original of one of the sales is said to have been left to the Bridgewater Public Library, presumably by Rev. William Lord McKinney.

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